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BARRE GAZETTE

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Voters act on STM articles in school parking lot

By Ellenor Downer
Staff Writer

BARRE – Voters in Barre met in the parking lot at Quabbin Regional High School Saturday, Nov. 21.

Moderator Joshua Smith asked voters to place Article 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 on a consent calendar. The Department of Revenue requested these five articles from the June Annual Town Meeting be revoted at a Special Town Meeting since the ATM was rescheduled past the end of the fiscal year.

Funding for article came from free cash. Voters approved Article 6 Wachusett Greenways $1,000, Article 7 police cruiser $45,000; Article 8 ambulance $285,000; Article 9 Ruggles Lane Parking Lot $50,000 and Article 10 Cable Access expenditure $100,000.

Article 1 and 2 involved snow removal. Article 1, which reduced the FY21 tax rate by $5,149 from FY 19 free cash to the FY 2020 snow removal over-time and part-time account, passed unanimously. Article 2 took $30,638.63 from FY19 free cash to the FY 2020 snow removal expense account.

With Article 3 voters unanimously rescinded the vote under Article 17 High Efficiency Project for the senior center at the June 21, 2017 ATM. Since the town received a grant for the energy efficiency project, the town no longer needs to encumber the funds.

In the next articles, voters unanimously voted to reduce the FY21 tax rate by $81,417 to balance the FY21 budget.

Voters unanimously voted to transfer $10,000 from FY19 free cash to fund the Other Post Employment Benefits account in Article 5. Voters took no action on Article 11, which would have funded a new fire department administration vehicle.

Due to a typographical error there was no Article 12. In Article 13, voters accepted a land donation, which would extend the boundaries

See BARRE , page 5

Selectmen hold hearing on tax classification

Board follow assessors recommendations

By Ellenor Downer
Staff Writer

BARRE – Assessor Jesse Warren said the board of assessors unanimously recommended for the town to continue with the residential factor of one at the tax classification hearing Monday, Nov. 30.

He said the town of Barre is 87% residential, 5% commercial and 2% industrial. The assessors also recommended that the selectmen not adopt a small business discount. Warren said the discount went to the property owner not the business owner. He said it would shift the burden to the commercial and industrial.

The tax classification hearing is a step in setting the FY 21 tax rate for the town. The FY 20 tax rate, which is July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020 was $17.87.

Agreement with school

Selectmen unanimously voted to sign an agreement with the Quabbin Regional School District to let the school spend money the board allotted from town's CARES Act funds. The money will be used to purchase laptops and Chrome books for Ruggles Lane Elementary School. Items must be bought no later than Dec. 30.

Grants

Town administrator Jessica Sizer said the town received about a quarter of a million dollars in grants so far this fiscal year. The town clerk received a grant to digitalize public records. The police department got a grant to purchase security cameras and the fire department received a grant to purchase two rescue saws.

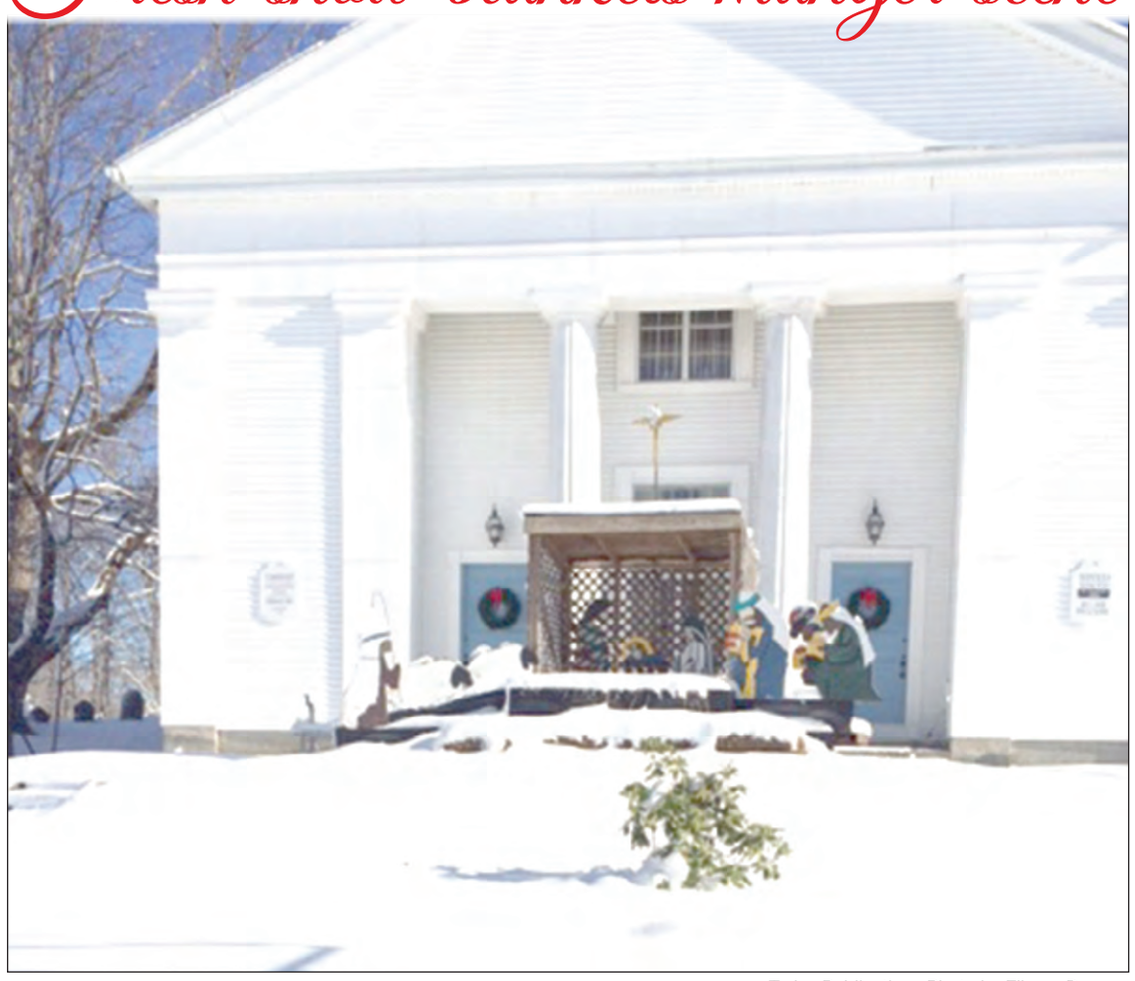
Liquor license

Sue Mason filed an application to serve wine during paint classes know as sip and paint. The town administrator said that her studio was within the 500-foot proximity to a church. Another hearing must be held and all abutters notified by mail within 14 days of the hearing

See SELECTMEN , page 5

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Fresh snow blankets manger scene



Turley Publications Photo by Ellenor Downer

Snow blanketed the area last Saturday. The nativity in front of the Oakham Congregational Church has a coating of fresh snow.

Selectmen hold virtual community outreach hearing

By Ellenor Downer
Staff Writer

HUBBARDSTON – Boey Bertold of Paper Crane Cannabis hosted a community outreach hearing for the public regarding a proposed marijuana establishment at 50 Gardner Road.

He hosted the hearing during a joint meeting of the Hubbardston Board of Selectmen and Planning Board. Bertold said the state recently established a courier license for recreational marijuana, modeled on the medical marijuana courier system. Most medical dispensaries deliver to the customer. The courier license would allow home delivery for customers that do not want to go to the establishment from orders purchased online. The driver must be a registered marijuana agent and would be limited in the amount transported at one time: the vehicle must have a storage area for the marijuana as well.

He also requested to have an outdoor grow in the rear of the property.

The Planning Board approved a special permit for the recreational dispensary and indoor grow. The location is not within the 500-foot buffer zone from public and private schools.

He said the customer must come to the dispensary and register before using the online order and courier delivery in answer to the question on how does the business insure online purchase is complaint with the law. The customer signs up and has his/her ID checked. At the door, the ID is checked and scanned.

Bertold said the hours of delivery were basically the hours of operation at the dispensary 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

He said he wanted to do the outdoor grow this coming year. He said the outdoor grow would be fenced, have high security cameras and follow all state requirements. The original application for Paper Crane Cannabis listed a shop and an indoor grow facility. The application would need to be modified to include an outdoor grow facility and the courier's license.

Bertold said the establishment would pay a percentage of its total sales to the town for five years, which would be part of the host agreement. The previous host agreement was 3% of total sales for five years plus the town would receive a 3% sales tax from the retail establishment.

See HUBBARDSTON , page 6

Public forum for North Brookfield's west side infrastructure plan

NORTH BROOKFIELD – The town of North Brookfield will hold a public forum for the Town's ongoing west side infrastructure plan project Tuesday, Dec. 15, at 6 p.m., at the North Brookfield Police Station, 55 School St. Socially distanced seating will be available. The forum will be broadcast live by North Brookfield Cable Access TV and video will be streamed on the North Brookfield Local Public Access Cable Youtube channel. All documentation will be available on the town's website, www.northbrookfield.net. Neighborhood residents and other interested parties are encouraged to attend or otherwise participate.

At the forum, the town's engineering consultant will discuss the initial results of its extensive field survey of drainage systems, water and sewer mains, roads, and sidewalks in the west side neighborhood. This neighborhood is defined as the area bound by Spring, High, Mount Pleasant and North Main streets, and part of Bell Street near the town center. The overall goals of the project are to evaluate existing infrastructure systems in the project area, to develop concepts for improvement projects in key areas; and to produce a final plan with prioritized and phased recommendations for implementation, for use in local planning and in seeking additional grant funds for detailed design and construction.

This part of North Brookfield is currently served by water, sewer and stormwater drainage systems dating to the early and middle 1900s. Water mains in parts of the neighborhood are undersized or made from hard-to-maintain materials. Some sewer lines are prone to clogs or suffer from infiltration or inflow. Stormwater infrastructure is lacking in parts of the neighborhood and, where present, is not always adequate for today's intense storms. Aside from aging subsurface infrastructure, surface elements such as roads, sidewalks

See NORTH BROOKFIELD, page 6



Turley Publications Photo by Ellenor Downer

The Oakham Common presents a winter scene Monday morning after the Saturday, Dec. 5 storm.

MOC CFCE holding Toys for Tots registration

BARRE – MOC's Child Care and Head Start/Coordinated Family and Community Engagement program kicks off its annual Toys for Tots campaign. Families must register online at www.mocinc.org/toysfortots. People should note that the address is case sensitive; remind families to use all lowercase letters.

Here are the qualifications for interested families:

Applicants will need to provide a birth certificate for each child registered.

Applicants must meet one of the following income requirements: receive Masshealth, SNAP benefits, Housing Assistance, TANAF, WIC,SSI or SSDI.

Applicants must be the parents or legal guardian of the child for whom toys are being requested.

Applicants must currently be enrolled or participating in MOC CFCE, ParentChild+, Head Start, or Early Head Start programming. Applicants must

See TOYS FOR TOTS, page 6

Join The Annual Ware
MAIN STREET STROLL
Saturday, December 12th, 10am-5pm
Unique Shops, Drawings & Give-A-Ways & More

News of the Towns



Round Town

Ellenor Downer
413-967-3505

Food pantry distributes Dec. 17

Barre Food Pantry distributions will occur Thursday, Dec. 17 from 5:30-7 p.m. The Barre Food Pantry schedules their two distributions each month on the morning of the second Wednesday and the evening of the third Thursday. As they have since the late March distribution, in order to maintain safe physical distances between volunteers and between volunteers and clients, Dec. 17 will again be "drive-through" style distributions. Clients will line up in their vehicles on Park Street and proceed into the right hand (east) entrance driveway of the Barre Congregational Church.They will remain in their cars. They'll drive up and be checked in by a volunteer, then continue up to the church building where their groceries will be put into the trunk or wayback of their vehicle by volunteers. Based on the success of distributions so far, the Food Pantry volunteers believe this "drive-through" style is the safest possible way to get food to clients and to help keep everyone well. They are preparing for the distribution by only working in shifts at the pantry, in small household/family groups. People should not arrive to volunteer Dec. 17 without first contacting Sonja Blaney, coordinator of volunteers, at 978-355-6921 or Chuck Radlo at 978-355-6463. Because conditions have been changing rapidly, people should continue to check for updates on the Barre Food Pantry website at http://www.barrefoodbank.org/index.htm and the Barre Food Pantry Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/Barre-Food-Pantry-100156068300314/.

Toys for Tots

MOC's Child Care and Head Start/Coordinated Family and Community Engagement program kicks off its annual Toys for Tots campaign. Families must register online at www.mocinc.org/toysfortots. People should note that the address is case sensitive; remind families to use all lowercase letters. Here are the qualifications for interested families: Applicants will need to provide a birth certificate for each child registered. Applicants must meet one of the following income requirements: receive Masshealth, SNAP benefits, Housing Assistance, TANAF, WIC,SSI or SSDI. Applicants must be the parents or legal guardian of the child for whom toys are being requested. Applicants must currently be enrolled or participating in MOC CFCE, ParentChild+, Head Start, or Early Head Start programming. Applicants must reside in Fitchburg, Leominster, Westminster, Ashburnham, Gardner, Templeton, Barre, Hardwick, Oakham, Hubbardston or New Braintree. Toys for Tots requires that children receiving toys must be between the age of birth to 13 years. People may email Cindy at clapinskas@mocinc.org with any questions.

Will things ever be the same again?

By Carole Gariepy



Turley Publications Courtesy Photo

Laura McCarthy of Barre Plains is shown working in her basement office for Hanover Insurance Company at a desk she designed and built herself.

Never before did life change so dramatically as it did last March. It felt like life as we knew it had put on emergency brakes. And there was no preparation for the new way we had to live if we were to live safely. Many of us wonder if we will return to our former lifestyle or has the virus permanently changed our way of living. Is the new normal here to stay?

Change is something that happens every day. We can't stop it. When train transportation was developed, the stagecoach industry went out of business; the beautiful old coaches are now only important as museum pieces. When cars and tractors were invented, horses were no longer needed; they are only kept for recreational use and the pleasure the animals bring. Train and ship travel ended when the airplane became a safe and fast mode of transportation; trains and ships are now used primarily for transporting cargo.

The telephone replaced the telegraph, and today the telephone is used less for talking than it is for texting, directing us to a location, taking a picture, looking something up on Google, mail ordering things, checking the time, using it for a flashlight, and on and on. It's amazing all the things that small phone can do. And now we can even see the person we are talking to.

The computer has made letter writing almost a thing of the past; it's quite exciting to receive a handwritten letter. Digital cameras have replaced the old film ones. Now we can see the photo we took instantly and even forward it right off to a friend. Yes, we've seen lots of changes.

For sure, the restaurant business will boom again and we'll go on trips, but working from home is a big change that may last forever. It could work well for some positions but not for all. Teachers definitely have to be in the classroom to teach most effectively, especially in the primary grades, and medical people can best treat patients if they can examine them. However, there may be some elements of those positions that will be effective online. But, most computer jobs do not require an office outside the house. My nephew took regular business trips to Europe and Asia. Now he meets with all clients on Zoom. Sometimes the meetings are held in the middle of the night to accommodate the different time zones, but he says it works very effectively. The company saves a lot of money on airline, hotel, food expenses, and the cost of office space. Also, there isn't business time lost because of travel. Why would they want to change back? Another change may affect architects who will likely be including an office in house plans.

A cousin from Minneapolis brought up another interesting question. She talked about all the tall office buildings in the city that are not being used because people are working from home. What will become of them if it is determined that working from home is effective and less costly? Will the buildings be converted to apartments?

We've suddenly been thrust into a new world. I think of the book titled "Brave New World." I never read that book, but the title impresses me because it takes courage to live in the world we live in now. A person needs courage to keep positive. Today's "new world" makes me look at the old world differently.

The virus reminds me of the statement declared when Sam Colt made his pistol in 1872. It was called "The Equalizer." With that pistol, a small man could be as powerful as a big man. The virus is an equalizer. It looks at all people as the same. Everyone is vulnerable to the virus's awful attack no matter the color of a person's skin or the size of one's bank account. Everyone in the world is facing the same threat.

Change. Yes, there will be changes. Maybe some will be good changes. Maybe the virus can help us see what is really important for our society. Maybe we can become a better people, a more caring people, a more peaceful people, able to see that we are all equal. In the meantime, let us show our respect and caring by wearing our masks and practicing the safety rules.

Listening center offers gift certificates

BARRE – Gift certificates have been the perfect gift, forever and they still are. At Listening center, they are valid for any class, program, service or practitioner and they don't expire. Gift certificates are available this year for purchase for the holidays. Like everything else, Listening is doing things a bit differently, so it does require advance purchase with a check sent to Listening or people can go onto the website and use the donate button, in the memo type that it is for a gift certificate. People should email listeningwellnesscenter@gmail.com to arrange a gift certificate so that Listening may get it sent to the correct place and on time. All gift certificates should be ordered by Dec. 18 to guarantee delivery by the 25 unless they would like to purchase expedited shipping.

Turning Toward the Light with Éowyn Ahlstrom of Middle Path Healing Arts will be held Sunday, Dec. 27 from 2-4 p.m. This workshop will provide an opportunity to bring awareness to the experiences of the winter solstice, which, here in the northern hemisphere, marks the transition from growing darkness and longer nights to growing light and longer days. The session will include discussion about the experiences of the practices, time for questions, and guidance around setting intentions for the coming year. Several ticket options are available. No one will be turned away for financial reasons, scholarship/free tickets are available thanks to a grant from Barre Savings Bank Charitable Foundation. Massage Therapist Taylor McFaul offers gift certificates for massage. McFaul offers therapeutic massage for clients in need of general relaxation and relief of any muscular tension. Treatments are 30, 60 or 90 minutes.

People can book appointments or arrange for a gift certificate by calling Taylor McFaul directly at 413-834-1815 or by going on line at http://taylormcfaul.clinicsense.com/.

All Massachusetts safety protocols are followed with regards to COVID-19. New hours are Sundays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Thursdays from 3-7 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Hubbardston

Ellenor Downer
edowner@turley.com



Medicare Advantage Plan holds open enrollment

The Massachusetts Medicare Savings Program pays your monthly Part B Premium, $148.50 for 2021, and people may be eligible for significant assistance in paying their Medicare costs. They will also be eligible for extra help from Social Security to help pay their prescription drug costs. The income eligibility for a single person is $1,755 and for a married couple $2,371. Asset limits are $15,720 single and $23,600 for a married couple. This period will run from Jan. 1 to March 31 of each year. During this timeframe, people can change to another Medicare Advantage Plan (HMO or PPO plans). They can also leave their Medicare Advantage Plan and return to Original Medicare and pick up a drug plan and supplement coverage. People must be in a Medicare Advantage Plan on Jan. 1 to take advantage of this.

SHINE counselors are available to discuss Medicare questions or concerns. People may contact a SHINE counselor by phoning their local senior center.

Hubbardston Light Fight

Hubbardston Light Fight will be held Dec.11, 12 and 13 and Dec. 18, 19 and 20 from 5-9 p.m. each night. People will follow the road listing to see all the entries and vote online for their favorite light display. Map listings and voting link will be made available a few days before contest starts. This year there are three categories for entry forms: Traditional-Classic, Go Big or Stay Home and new this year a Business category. The link is https://www.hubbardstonma.us/special-events/pages/hubbardston-light-fight.

Hubbardston Police CHOP program

The Hubbardston Police Department is holding a Community Holiday Outreach Program. The program and the donations that are provided, help insure that each child in Hubbardston is able to open gifts on Christmas morning. This year there is a clear need for toys as several families are struggling through these uncertain times. The police department set up donation boxes at several area businesses as well as one in the police station lobby. Any officer on duty can also accept toys up until Friday, Dec.18. If people would rather make a monetary donation, they may do so by sending a check to CHOP, Hubbardston Police Department, 7 Main St. Unit #9, Hubbardston, MA 01452. This fund not only helps families in need around the holidays but also helps families and seniors throughout the year.

Senior center activities

The Hubbardston Senior Center continues to slowly open. The senior center has space limitations, only 10 people allowed in the building at a time. Monday and Wednesday mornings Coffee With Friends is from 9 to 11 a.m. On Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9 to 11 a.m. is the Walking Club. Due to space limitations, please call to register for any of the activities below: Bingo: Monday 12-3 p.m. call Flo 978-928-5113 to register. Meals on Wheels: Call the Senior Center 978-928-1400 extension 211. Food delivery on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Thursday is drive thru for food and eggs is 9:30 a.m. to noon. This schedule is subject to change due to Covid restrictions.

Postponements and cancellations due to the coronavirus pandemic

Due to the social distancing requirements with the COVID-19 pandemic, the annual Christmas in New Braintree Craft Fair will not be held in December 2020. Next year's fair will take place Saturday, Dec. 11, 2021.

Given the current surge in COVID cases in the state, and with an abundance of caution for the health and safety of the cast and crew, Theatre at the Mount's live stream production of Winter Wonderettes is cancelled.

Happy Holidays
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508-829-7333

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Wishing you a happy and healthy holiday season!

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978-355-2359
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Christmas & New Year's Eve 8:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
Closed Christmas Day & New Year's Day

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2021 QUABBIN HISTORY CALENDAR
And A NEW QUABBIN BOOK by J.R. Greene
GREAT GIFTS! ON SALE AT:
BARRE: Family Pharmacy
HARDWICK: Mimi's Coffeehouse
HUBBARDSTON: Country Trail Store
NO. BROOKFIELD: Brookfield Orchards
PETERSHAM: Quabbin Woods Restaurant
RUTLAND: Pharmacy
or email: jrg01331@webtv.net

Corrections policy

The Barre Gazette will gladly correct factual errors that appear in this paper. Corrections or clarifications will always appear on Page 2. To request a orrection, send information to Editor Ellenor Downer at barre-news@turley.com or call 978-355-4000. Corrections may also be requested in writing at Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.

NOTICE

ERRORS: Each advertiser is requested to check their advertisement the first time it appears. This paper will not be responsible for more than one corrected insertion, nor will be liable for any error in an advertisement to a greater extent than the cost of the space occupied by the item in the advertisement.

News of the Towns

Public Meetings

Note: Many meetings are closed to the public or will be held remotely.

BARRE

Central Office/Audit/Administrative Review Subcommittee – Dec. 10 at 5:30 p.m.
QRSD School Committee – Dec. 10 at 6:30 p.m.
Collective Bargaining Subcommittee – Dec. 11 at 9 a.m.
Board of Health – Dec. 14 at 5 p.m.
Water Commission – Dec. 14 at 6:30 p.m.
DPW Commission – Dec. 14 at 7 p.m.
Board of Assessors – Dec. 15 at 6 p.m.
Planning Board – Dec. 15 at 7 p.m.
Sewer Commission – Dec.17 at 7 p.m.
Felton Field Commission – Jan. 5 at 6:30 p.m.
Council on Aging – Jan. 6 at 1 p.m.
Barre Housing Authority – Jan. 7 at 3 p.m.

HARDWICK

Gilbertville Public Library – Dec. 11 at 4 p.m.
Gilbertville-Wheelwright Sewer Commissioners – Dec. 14 at 6 p.m.
Board of Selectmen – Dec. 14 at 6:30 p.m.
Gilbertville Water District – Dec. 15 at 5:30 p.m.
Conservation Commission –Dec. 15 at 6:30 p.m.
Recycling Commission – Jan. 5 at 6:30 p.m.
Board of Health – Jan. 7 at 6:30 p.m.
Paige Library Trustees – Jan. 7 at 7 p.m.

HUBBARDSTON

Board of Selectmen – Dec. 14, Jan. 4 and Jan. 11 at 6:30 p.m.
Town Center Committee – Dec. 17 at 7 p.m.
Open Space Committee – Dec. 29 and Jan. 26 at 7 p.m.
Historic Commission – Jan. 2 at 10 a.m.
Conservation Commission – Jan. 5 at 7 p.m.
Planning Board – Jan. 7 at 6:30 p.m.

PETERSHAM

Cemetery Commission – Dec. 10 at 7 p.m.
Conservation Commission – Dec. 11 at 5 p.m. and Jan. 5 at 7:30 p.m.
Council on Aging – Dec. 14 at 10 a.m.
Nichewaug Inn and Academy Committee 2020 – Dec. 14 at 6:30 p.m.
Selectboard – Dec. 15 at 6:30 p.m.
Board of Health – Dec. 17 and Jan. 7 at 7 p.m.
Petersham Historic District – Dec. 17 at 7 p.m.
Planning Board – Dec. 24 at 7 p.m.
Open Space and Recreation Committee – Jan. 5 at 6:30 p.m.

RUTLAND

Library Board of Trustees – Dec. 10 at 7 p.m.
Planning Board Public Hearing – Dec. 22 at 6:50 p.m.

Barre Dining Center

BARRE — Elder Services of Worcester Area Nutrition Program welcomes guests to dine at the Barre Senior Center, 557 South Barre Rpad. The following meals will be served for the week of Dec. 14.

Meal sites are closed and there are only Meals on Wheels deliveries.

Volunteers are needed at the Barre dining site. Volunteers are needed for Meals on Wheels (mileage reimbursement) and in the kitchen. People should contact 978-355-5027.

MON. – Beef stew, rice, corn niblets, pineapple, Italian bread

TUES. – Lasagna with meatballs, green beans, chocolate pudding, diet = sugar free chocolate pudding, whole wheat bread

WED. – Chicken fajitas, Spanish rice, black beans and corn, sour cream, pita bread, pineapple

THURS. – Hot dog, baked beans, mixed vegetables, fresh fruit, hot dog bun, mustard

FRI. – Roast turkey with gravy, mashed sweet potatoes, peas, fruited ambrosia, pumpernickel bread

*Diabetic friendly dessert

**Higher sodium entree

Meal includes milk and margarine. Menus are subject to change. All meals are served at about 11:45 a.m. each weekday. Reservations should be made the day before by calling 978-355-5027 before 10:30 a.m. The donation of $2.50 per meal helps keep the program running.

Barre library enables curbside pickup feature

BARRE – Dec. 2 Woods Memorial Library became the first library in the C/W MARS Network to enable its new Curbside Pickup feature, which allows patrons to make appointments from their library accounts. For patrons who usually receive automated email and text hold notifications, those were also re-enabled on that day.

To use the new feature, place holds online at catalog.cwmars.org or by contacting the library via phone or email. As soon as the hold becomes available at the library, the patron will receive an automated email or text notification, as well as a second email or text with a link to make an appointment. Those who do not receive these notices will continue to be notified by phone. Follow the link to schedule an appointment during one of the available dates and times. Patrons will be redirected to log into their account first. They can also add notes, update and cancel appointments on this page.

When the patrons arrive at the library during their designated time, they can click "Alert staff of your arrival" from their account on their mobile device. The button will not be active until their appointment time.

Items will be checked out to patrons when they are picked up. Checkout receipts will be emailed automatically, although they may request a printed copy.

Patrons must make an appointment through the catalog, by phone or by email in order to pick up material. The library cannot serve people without an appointment.

For step-by-step instructions on how to use this new feature or for detailed instructions on the library's outdoor service procedures, people may contact the library by phone at 978-355-2533, email at barrelibrary@gmail.com or visit our website, www.barrelibrary.org.

St. Francis to hold Christmas dinner for seniors

BARRE – St. Francis of Assisi Parish will be providing a Christmas dinner for seniors Sunday, Dec. 20. All meals will be delivered. The menu is turkey, gravy, stuffing, mashed potato, squash, and apple crisp. Deliveries will start at 11 a.m. There are sign-up sheets around town at Grandview Terrace, Bradford Building and the Barre Mobile Home Park and at the back of each of their churches.

However, people who are home bound and would like to have a dinner delivered and or if they know of a senior that would appreciate a dinner, they should sign up by calling Maryann Watson at 978-257-8183. People can leave a message on her answering machine. She will need name, address, phone number and the number of meals. The deadline for sign-up is Saturday, Dec.12.

St. Francis of Assisi Parish with the aid of Hearts on Fire group will be providing a Christmas dinner for seniors and could use some helpers. This parish outreach project is being funded by the Parish Emergency Fund.

People willing to help with the food prep, packing or delivery should contact Paula Wood at 978-434-1246.

Luminaries will light the night on Christmas Eve

BROOKFIELD – Since 2002, the town of Brookfield has lit up the night on Christmas Eve with the beautiful tradition of luminaries lighting up the Town Common and Route 9, and this year is no exception. The Brookfield Luminaries Committee is gearing up to organize the placing of over 1,800 luminaries around the Brookfield Village, and down Route 9.

The sound of holiday bells will be rung loud and clear at 5 p.m. from the Congregational Church for all to enjoy. Please social distance to six feet from people not included in your family group and wear a mask. We encourage families to drive around and enjoy this event from your vehicles.

New this year will be a Memorial Display. There will be a display board on the Common listing names of loved ones in whose memory donations for luminaries have been made. Please submit to M.P.L.Friends@gmail.com or mail to Luminaries, Friends of the Library P.O. Box 528, Brookfield, MA 01506.

The tradition can be brought home, which will help fund this enormous undertaking, by purchasing luminaries for display at home. Luminaries are available for sale at the library, with curbside pickup by calling 508-867-6339, and Tip Top Country Store, with curbside pickup by calling 508-867-0460 or tiptoponline.us, six candles and bags for $5 donation. The funds support next year's luminaries, through Friends of the Merrick Public Library.

The luminaries are funded by the Friends of the Library, local businesses and private donors. To donate please mail to: Luminaries, Friends of the Library, P.O. Box 528, Brookfield, MA 01506 or drop off at the library.

Anyone is welcome to volunteer at any stage of this simple yet beautiful tradition. Anyone wishing to be a part of this wonderful Brookfield ritual, should please arrive at 2 p.m. when volunteers set up luminaries on the common. At 3:30 p.m., lighting of candles begins and at 5 p.m. seasonal chimes begin. Clean-up is Christmas morning at 9 a.m. If the weather is uncooperative, this event will take place on New Year's Eve.



Courtesy photo

Brookfield will once again light up the night Christmas Eve with luminaries. Everyone is encouraged to volunteer to set them up, and luminaries can also be purchased for the home.

Light the Way

By Doris Matthews

On Christmas Eve you'll see them
along the roads of Brookfield town
small white bags aglow with candle light.
The tradition began first from one hand
then two hands to a few and now many more
join in the folding and filling and lighting
each one creating the soft glow
that beckons us all to the
true meaning of this blessed eve-
light the way for Mary and Joseph
as they search for a place
to stay for the night.
A ribbon of welcoming candlelight
invites us all to celebrate
this magical season of believing
as we continue to welcome you all to
our town for the night.
Come and feel the true spirit of Christmas-
just follow the lights.

Doris Matthews is a member of the Luminaries Committee.

Oakham

Ellenor Downer
edowner@turley.com



OHA to hold lottery fundraiser

The Oakham Historical Association has launched its 16th annual lottery fundraiser. It's called the OHA 20-20 lotter, one ticket costs $20, good for 20 drawings. Only 100 tickets are printed, numbered from 00 to 99. If the holders ticket number matches the middle two digits drawn in the Massachusetts Numbers Game on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, a $50 check will automatically be sent to the name and address specified on the ticket stub. Nearly every year at least one person wins twice, a few ticket holders have won three times and one year someone won four times. The drawings begin Jan. 5, 2021 and end on March 11. The tickets are great stocking stuffers. And watching to see if a ticket is a winner offers an entertaining diversion during the pandemic. Proceeds benefit the association's museum and the Young Family Annex located at 1221 Old Turnpike Road. Even though the church holiday fair was canceled this year, the OHA will continue to sell tickets by mail or by appointment. To request tickets, people may contact Kathy Young at kayoung720@yahoo.com or 508-882-3137.

Trail building work day

Due to the snow storm Dec. 5, East Quabbin Land Trust will hold a second work day to continue the trail in Oakham Saturday, Dec. 12 from 9 a.m. to noon. Volunteers will meet at Ware Corner Road at 9 a.m. a.m. They should bring loppers and rakes. They should RSVP to Pat at youtheducation@eqlt.org.

Dismas Farm tree sale

Dismas Farm, 687 Lincoln Road, will hold its second annual tree sale Saturday, Dec. 12 from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be homemade Christmas crafts, cookies, cocoa and socially distanced hayrides.

'Light up Oakham'

The Oakham Parks and Recreation will host the first ever "Light up Oakham" Holiday Decorating Contest People may vote for their favorite now through Dec. 12. Map and on-line voting form will be available on the Oakham Parks and Recreation Facebook Page. People, who do not Internet capabilities may email Parks and Recreation for a map. First place prize is a giant inflatable Gemmy Animated Projection Airblown Santa and Dogs Decorating Tree Scene standing 9.5 feet tall and second place prize is an inflatable snowman family standing 6 feet tall. Winners will be announced Saturday, Dec.19.

Church services

Sunday, Dec. 13 the Oakham Congregational Church will hold its 10 a.m. worship service in the church sanctuary. Sunday School is held downstairs in Fellowship Hall People should wear a mask and practice social distancing in the sanctuary.

Woods Memorial Library service hours expanded

BARRE – Thanks to CAREs Act funding, Woods Memorial Library has expanded their material pickup appointment and return service hours until the end of 2020.

The service hours are Tuesdays from 2:30-7:30 p.m.; Wednesdays and Thursdays from 10:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; Fridays from 2:30-4:30 p.m. and Saturdays from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Hours may change depending upon staff availability.

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Submissions are always welcome.
Send your stories and photos to edowner@turley.com

Opinion

Guest Column

SOCIAL SECURITY MATTERS

Should I Claim Social Security at 62?

By Russell Gloor
Guest columnist

Dear Rusty: I'm looking for information about retiring and starting my Social Security very soon at age 62. I'm not sure if I want to do it because I'm not sure if I can. Can you help me figure this out? Signed: Hesitant

Dear Hesitant: I know it can be daunting trying to figure out whether and when to claim your Social Security benefits. I'll give you some of the basics:

First, you should know that if you claim your benefits at age 62, your benefit amount will be considerably reduced from what it would be if you waited longer to claim. At 62, your benefit will be about 28% less than it would be at your full retirement age (FRA) which, for you is 66 years and 8 months. Your benefit will continue to grow by a fraction of a percentage point each month you wait, until it reaches 100% at your FRA. You can choose to delay even longer than your FRA, and your benefit will continue to grow up to age 70 when you reach your maximum benefit amount. For you, that maximum at age 70 would be about 28% more than you would get at your FRA and about 75% more than you would get at age 62. There is a considerable financial advantage to waiting to claim.

If you continue working, and you claim at age 62 (or at any age before your FRA), you'll be subject to Social Security's "earnings test," which limits how much you can earn before they take back some of your benefits. Starting at age 62 and continuing until the year you attain FRA, there will be an annual limit to your earnings (the 2021 limit is $18,960) and, if you exceed that, Social Security will take back benefits equal to $1 for every $2 you are over the limit. That could mean you will go some number of months without receiving benefits until Social Security recovers what you owe because you exceeded the earnings limit. Of course, if you fully retire from work now that is not a concern, but it may influence a future decision to return to work. Social Security's earnings limit no longer applies after you reach your full retirement age.

Your marital status also comes into play. If you are married, and your benefit as a spouse will be more than your personal benefit will be, then there are some special considerations which might affect your claiming decision. Generally, if your spousal benefit will be more than your own benefit (from your lifetime work record), and your husband isn't yet collecting benefits, it's often wise to claim your own earlier and take the larger spouse benefit later. Of course, if you're not married you need only be concerned about your personal benefit from your own lifetime earnings record and waiting for a larger life-long benefit, if possible, is often the most prudent choice.

Those are the basic things you should consider when trying to decide when to claim your benefits. But your need for the money now, plus your health and life expectancy are also key to your decision. If you need the money earlier to make ends meet, and you won't be severely affected by the earnings limit, then claiming early can be your most prudent choice. Or, if you are not enjoying good health and have reason to believe that you won't live at least until today's average age for a woman (about 87), then that also suggests claiming early. But, if you are working and don't really need the money, and you are in good health and expect to live to a ripe old age, then waiting longer to claim a higher benefit is usually a better strategy.

The reality is that everyone's personal situation is different and there is no single answer to the question of when to claim Social Security. I hope the above gives you at least a starting point for your decision.

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association. NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org

Russell Gloor is a Social Security advisor for AMAC.

How to submit photos and news to the Barre Gazette

Readers, institutions, municipalities, non-profit groups and civic organizations are strongly encouraged to send the Barre Gazette their hometown news and photos.

News items and press releases should be sent in an e-mail to barrenews@turley.com as either a Microsoft Word document attachment or pasted directly into the e-mail message screen. Be sure to include who, what, when, where and why in the submission, preferably written in the third person unless it is a letter to the editor or guest column.

Please send photo captions identifying all subjects in the image(s) from left to right and include first and last name, hometown, title if applicable, and a brief description of what subjects are doing in the photo.

E-mail uncorrected, raw, RGB color digital photos at highest resolution directly off the camera or sized at least 6 inches wide at 200 resolution, no larger than 1 megabite.

They may be e-mailed as attachments to barrenews@turley.com or faxed to 413-967-6009. Deadline for hard copy is noon on Friday and e-mailed copy noon on Monday. Publicity chairpersons are encouraged to send in news about upcoming fundraising or other calendar events at least three weeks before they take place.

The Barre Gazette will respond to all e-mail messages received. People may call the Barre Gazette at 413-967-3505 for help and suggestions. People who do not have e-mail may mail these materials to: Ellenor Downer, Editor, Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005.



In Past Pages

5 years ago (Dec. 10, 2015)

It's an exciting era in the history of the Quabbin girls basketball program as Melissa Proffitt, a 2007 graduate, has been recently appointed as the new girls' jayvee coach. Proffitt will join new girls' varsity coach Ryan Burnett as they get ready to open the winter season with high hopes and the return of outstanding player, Rachel Myra. To say that she merely likes basketball is definitely an understatement as Proffitt is more than excited to begin this new journey back in extremely familiar territory. Growing up in Hubbardston, attending Quabbin and playing center and sometimes forward for the Lady Panthers on their varsity team beginning her freshman year, this Lady Panther Alum knows her stuff about the game of basketball.

Emily Raskett of Hardwick, a junior majoring in civil engineering at Worcester Polytechnic Institute, recently completed an intensive, hands-on research project in Switzerland. The project was titled "Facilitating Corporate Project Sponsorship."

Senator Anne M. Gobi (D-Spencer) and Representative Donald R. Berthiaume (R-Spencer) are happy to announce that Grass Roots Farm in New Braintree ha been awarded $25,000 through Agricultural Energy Grant Program administered by the Massachusetts Department of Agriculture. These grants funds will be used to install a 24.96 kW Photovoltaic System on the farm's property. Grass Roots Farm has been owned and operated by Kristin and Tom "TJ" Bohan since 2004.

10 years ago (Dec. 16, 2010)

Student Advisory Council members Tove Freeman and Adam Oulette provided their report to the school committee on Dec. 9. Freeman told the committee that during the month of November, the student government sponsored a food drive, which collected a total of 1,632.25 pounds of food. The food was donated to the Hardwick and Barre Food banks. She said cash donations were also collected and donated to the Worcester Food Bank.

For those who have seen a Gilbert Players' production, they must wonder just how the elaborate stages are set, where the beautiful costumes come from, and where they find such talented actors and actresses. Linda Tomasi was the guest artist at the "Art Tea" held at the Cultural Center at Eagle Hill School. She explained the process of putting on a successful show. Tomasi, along with her husband John, are the theatre directors for the Gilbert Players. She said she has been involved with 120 shows in the last 10 years. Tomasi has also directed shows for area elementary schools and not charged for her time. "We want to keep the passion for the arts alive in young children especially, because they don't get that in schools anymore. Working with students has always been a favorite of ours."

It was hard to tell who had the best time at the Breakfast with Santa Claus event sponsored by the Petersham Lions Club at the Unitarian Church – the children or the volunteers, Kay Berry beautifully decorated the hall for the holidays. Santa, driven by Fire Captain Larry Robinson, arrived right on schedule, and his elf, Ashley Reed, helped the children to line up for their turn to sit on Santa's lap, have their picture taken by event chairman and Petersham Police Officer, Robert Hall. A delicious pancake breakfast was prepared by Lions Jeanine Legare, Mike and Karen LaChance, Sean and Becky Legare, and served by the Rev. John Pastor, Chip Bull, Dr. Alan Bachrach and Michelle Reed.

25 years ago (Dec. 14, 1995)

Madeline Willey and Gene Kennedy had the pleasure of taking pictures of little ones who will be observing their First Christmas for the Dec. 21 issue of the paper. Gene and Madeline used to travel to the homes but that proved time-consuming and rather dangerous this time of year, and three years ago the parents brought the little ones to the Barre Gazette.

A standing ovation was tendered the Hardwick Memorial Bell Choir at the completion of their Christmas concert. The large audience filling the beautifully decorated church responded enthusiastically to each of the numbers as they were skillfully rung by nine agile-handed ringers under the direction of Leon Thresher who founded the group 21 years ago. Thresher noted that Gwen Huntress, "who was here that first day back in 1974 is still with us" and introduced each member. The newest ringer is Janice Howland of New Braintree.

The Nifty Garden Stuff 4-H Club elected officers. They are: Robb Ward, president; Amy Hopkinson, vice president; Rebecca Doane, treasurer; Caitlyn Lichwell, secretary; Jason Ward, recreation leader; and Hannah Godin, news reporter.

38 years ago (Dec. 16, 1982)

Twenty-four students of the 4th grade in the Myron Richardson School, Gilbertville, led by Music Teacher Julie Mankowsky, and classroom teachers Mrs. Gael Wrobel and Mrs. Linda O'Donnell presented a program of Christmas songs and poems to the elders at the congregate meal site in the VFW Hall, Gilbertville.

Members and friends of the Alliance of the Unitarian Church met recently and constructed and filled 22 attractive Christmas snack containers for the elderly and shut-in of the community. Under the leadership of Mrs. Margo Danke, the following were Christmas elves for the morning: Mildred Hall, Hazel Cobb, Suzanne Young, Jane Hein, Rosalie Fiske, Rosamond Coolidge, Shirley Buell, Vibeke Holm, Martha Siccardi, Delight Hines and Olive Marsh. Sending contributions of goodie were Luella Robinson, Mary Riley, Jean Hazzard and Sue Hellen.

Mrs. Dominic Franciose of Maple Lane, Petersham, a former Barre resident, has returned home after spending 5 weeks in Deland, Florida where she became acquainted with her new grandson, Dominic Charles Franciose who was born on Oct. 29.

LOOK BACK
BarreWoman's Club Tea - 1970



Turley Publications File Photo

Gladys Mara of Barre, president of the Barre Woman's Club (seated), is shown with Anita Rich of Barre Plains.

PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID AT BARRE, MA
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Letter to the Editor

Letter urges comments against police reform bill

I spent seven years working in Massachusetts state prisons. Before I left I had a close look at the criminal justice system: judiciary, police, and corrections. The legislative bill just passed (S.2963) isn't merely wrongheaded; it's corrosive and dangerous in ways normal people are unable to comprehend. Social justice advocates have prevailed upon well intended reformers to give oversight of police to civilians with the power to strip law enforcement of qualified immunity. I could explain why this won't work as intended, but that would require lengthy conversation which the public was not allowed to have. Editorial policy limits comments to a handful of words, and I will use those words to warn the electorate that this wasn't about racism, or fairness. It's about the safety and security of those who keep us all safe and secure. Call your legislators; demand they urge our Governor not to sign this madness.

Jack McClintock
North Brookfield
Former prison psychologist

Guest column

Adventures of Gertrude the Cat

By Ruth Robinson

Dear Folks,



I am a little confused this morning. Missy has told me in uncertain terms that I cannot tell any stories this week, as she is too busy decorating for Christmas, writing Christmas cards and baking food to freeze.

I am to be on my best behavior and not disturb her and besides Santa Claus will be watching me. I don't know who he is as I have never met the gentleman.

What am I supposed to do all week? I can only sleep so much of the time and that will be boring and watching the birdies only takes a few minutes. Running across the organ foot pedals will make them clatter and the noise will upset her. Darn, she has made her bed so there are no blankets to crawl under and the newspapers went to the dump last Saturday.

At least, she did give me a bacon treat for breakfast and has put out my daily food. I hope my supper will be on time. She didn't take a shower this morning with all she planned to do today. She got breakfast and an early start on her work. So, there is no water in the shower drain to wet my feet.

I will jump on the spare bed even though I am not supposed to.

Oh, what is that box over there by the window? Missy must have put her extra projects in it to clear the top of the bed for Christmas. I will jump over to the box. It is nice and cozy in there. Whoops, I wiggled too much and it has tipped over onto the floor, but fortunately it didn't make any noise. Even so, I better get out of this room and have a nap somewhere.

Be good folks and wear those darn masks.

Love,
Gertrude

Turley Publications Letters to the Editor Policy

Letters to the editor should be 350 words or less in length. No unsigned or anonymous opinions will be published. We require letter writers to include his or her town of residence and home telephone number. We must authenticate authorship prior to publication. We reserve the right to edit or withhold any submissions deemed to be libelous or contain unsubstantiated allegations, personal attacks, defamation of character and offensive language. All unknown or alleged facts and quotations offered by the author need to cite credible, unbiased sources. Send letters to: Barre Gazette, P.O. Box 448, Barre, MA 01005 or via email to edowner@turley.com. The deadline for submissions is Friday at noon.

BARRE GAZETTE

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Serenity Hill Sampler

by Jane McCauley

I am writing this during the storm Saturday as I wanted to get it done in case we loose power. It rained heavily until 7:30 a.m. and then the big snow flakes came down. I didn't stop for the rest of the day. Some large branches fell in the backyard, but so far we have power. I heard from a friend that Barre was out of power. I remembered the icestorm of several years back and hopefully we are not going to see that again.

We have the snowblower tractor ready and the generator just in case. I always keep about ten gallons of water in water jugs in the cellar and a supply of sand in the garage and cellar. I don't like to use rock salt as it kills the plants.

I heard that the lights around town are very pretty. I haven't been out to see them yet. I did go to the Hubbardston Senior Center to bring some cans and bottles. Each year they purchase a new animal or figure for the Nativity that is located at the intersection of Wiilliamsville Road and Rt. 68 in Hubbardston. The selectmen would not let them have the nativity on the Town Common like it was for so many years. The money from the cans and bottles goes to purchase a piece to the nativity. This year a camel was added.

As promised I will be featuring some of my favorite cookie recipes in each of the columns until Christmas. I hope you will try some of them.

GINGER SNAP COOKIES

1 cup shortening or 2 sticks of butter
1 1/2 cups sugar
1/2 cup molasses
2 eggs, beaten
4 cups flour
4 teaspoons baking soda
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 teaspoon cloves
2 teaspoons ginger

In large bowl, combine shortening, sugar and molasses until smooth. Add beaten eggs and stir well. Add flour, soda and spices; stir well to combine. Roll cookie dough into tablespoon-size balls. Dip in a little sugar and flatten with the bottom of a glass. Place on ungreased cookie sheets. Bake in 375 degree oven for 10 to 12 minutes. Makes 8 dozen.

This and That

My daughter sent me a big package of Christmas fabric, which I made gift bags for my Christmas presents. One piece was large enough that I made a Santa bag to put the gifts in for delivery to where we will be going on Christmas.

On another day, I went down to my families graveside and trimmed the boxwood shrubs. I made a tree from the boxwood branche. I put it in the garage until closer to Christmas and will then decorate it with fresh fruit and berries. Boxwood is good as it last a long time. Sometimes I make a kissing ball, but I guess I am too old for that now.

Another day I printed off some tags with pictures of my family to use as labels. I used card stock and cut them out and punched a hole and added string or ribbon.

I haven't made any Christmas candy or cookies yet, but I have been collecting what I plan to make and putting the recipes in a special folder. I usually like to make peanut or pecan brittle.

I was sorry to read of the passing of Alexander Pepper. He was very helpful to me when I needed my computer fixed. He passed away Dec. 1 at the age of 78. He was a United States Vietnam War Navy Veteran and a gentleman. He lived on Gardner Road in Hubbardston,

May you all enjoy good health and wear your masks in public. The vaccine is coming.

Second Chance hopes to make up for donations drop

EAST BROOKFIELD – Giving Tuesday, the global day of giving celebrated on the Tuesday after Thanksgiving, is taking on renewed importance for Second Chance Animal Services this year. Like the many pet owners it serves, Second Chance Animal Services has been seriously challenged by COVID. The nonprofit reports donations are down by 40% this year, but the great need for services has increased dramatically.

According to development director Lindsay Doray, Second Chance is on track to help over 40,000 pets again this year, despite the fact that some programs like spay and neuter services and vaccine clinics were on hold in the spring to conserve critical supplies. "Since March, our veterinary hospitals have been seeing twice the number of emergencies and the volume has not slowed down. Other veterinary programs affiliated with schools had no choice but to suspend services, but Second Chance remained open to provide essential services for pets, we could not let them down."

"Support for Second Chance has been strong. I think people recognize that pets really need help now, with so many pet owners financially affected by the current health crisis. We need to be here for those pets. Our veterinary hospitals have never been more important so we can keep pets in their homes with the people who love them."

Doray encourages supporters to consider a donation for Giving Tuesday and check to see if their employer offers a match. "One area company offers a 4-time match which means an employee's $50 donation turns into $250 to help a pet facing a serious health crisis."

Doray adds people interested in making a Giving Tuesday donation can choose one of three ways. There's a special Giving Tuesday donation link at www.secondchanceanimals.org, a Giving Tuesday fundraiser on Facebook, or they can mail a check with Giving Tuesday on the memo line to Second Chance, P.O. Box 136, East Brookfield, MA 01515.

For holiday shoppers, Second Chance has several fundraisers going on right now. After the success of the online DinnerLESS Auction, they put together a Black Friday mini auction which closed on Sunday, Nov. 29 and a sweatshirt fundraiser aptly named Hoodies That Help where shoppers can order hoodies for home delivery. In December, Second Chance will be launching an online book-signing fundraiser with founder Sheryl Blancato, author of "Walking Off Leash." which tells the story of Second Chance and Mystery Pet Stocking fundraiser. "We are doing everything we can… we never want to say no to a 'second chance' for any pet that needs help."

Second Chance is a nonprofit 501c3 tax exempt organization that began in 1999 in East Brookfield and relies solely on donations from grants to operate. The organization operates an adoption center in East Brookfield, Community Veterinary Hospitals in North Brookfield, Springfield, and Worcester. Second Chance helps over 40,000 pets a year through adoption, spay/neuter, veterinary care, community outreach, educational outreach programs, training, and a pet food pantry. For more information, people may visit Second Chance's website at www.secondchanceanimals.org.

BARRE,
continued from page 1

of town owned Felton Field on Old Coldbrook Road, Map EA Parcel 12 and to finance administrative costs up to $500 from FY19 free cash. It required a two-third majority

Voters took no action on Article 14 for a senior center roof replacement. In the final article, voters unanimously approved the transfer of $2,125 from FY19 free cash to fund the 25% match for the Masschusetts Land Use Planning Grant. It will allow the Planning Board to address Natural Resource Protection Zoning (NRPZ), flexible frontage, accessory apartments, and other land use planning initiatives.

The Nov. 21 Special Town Meeting adjourned at 10:38 a.m.

SELECTMEN,
continued from page 1

for her application license to proceed.

Other business

Selectman chair Gregory O'Sullivan expressed his frustration and wondered why other boards and committees were not meeting in the selectmen's meeting room so their meetings could be broadcast and taped for viewing later by the public.

In My Backyard *by Ellenor Downer*

A Barre resident called to say he had pine siskins and evening grosbeaks at his feeder. Several people also reported seeing pine siskins. It appears to be an irruptive year; species including finches, evening grosbeaks, pine siskins and red-breasted nuthatches are moving south in high numbers.

Evening grosbeaks are eight inches long. The male has a yellow body, darker head with a bright yellow eyebrow and black and white wings. The female is brownish gray overall with yellow on the nape and black and white wings. The bill is yellow in winter and pale green in the summer. It is the same for both sexes.

Its song is a halting warble and the call is a ringing "peeer" and when given by a flock sounds like sleigh bells. Evening grosbeaks feed mainly on seeds of trees such as box elder, sugar maples, pines and tulip poplars. They also eat fruit, buds, nuts, insects, tree sap and road salt. At feeders, they prefer sunflower seeds.

The female lays two to five blue or bluish green with dark marks in a nest of lichens, twigs, roots and mosses lined with finer materials. The evening grosbeak breeding range is expanding. It is also an irruptive species, occurring in large numbers in some years. During this time, it is common at bird feeders.

Flying turkey

I received an email from a Quaboag Current reader. She said, "Last month, my neighbor had a turkey fly right through her closed condo window. She was not home, fortunately, but another neighbor had witnessed four large birds chasing the turkey, who was flying high. She entered the condo fearing for the safety of some cats there and eventually after trying to talk turkey shooed the turkey out with a throw pillow through another window she opened. However, much havoc was wrought. Glass, feathers, a bit of blood, were in every room, but the bathroom. A search was made in the woods behind us, but the injured turkey was not found." She said the general response was "Well, it is 2020."

Birds during snow storm

Last Saturday, Dec. 5 I had lots of birds at my feeders during the snowstorm. American goldfinch and black-capped chickadees perched on the thistle (niger) seed feeder with up to five or six at a time. Tufted titmice also grabbed thistle seeds. The male cardinal came to the tray feeder, which had black oil sunflower seeds. While the male ate from the tree, his mate gleaned seeds on the ground under the feeder. I had lots of bluejays as well. At one point, both the male cardinal and a blue jay ate from the feeder at the same time. Their blue and red feathers stood out against the white snow. I also had white-breasted nuthatches, juncos, woodpeckers and a lone sparrow, which didn't stay in place long enough to identify.

Otters on the ice

Dec. 7, I saw three otters on a section of Long Pond in Rutland, which had iced over.

People may report a bird sighting or bird related experience by calling me at 413-967-3505, leaving a message at extension 100 or emailing mybackyard88@aol.com or edowner@turley.com.

Coriander, fit for cookie-making

IN THE GARDEN



Roberta McQuaid
Columnist

My family and I have been enjoying Christmas by Candlelight at Old Sturbridge Village for as long as the program has been running. Wanting to visit the Village after a long work day is through is a real testament to how wonderful this evening event is. It was there that we first sampled a coriander cookie made by a recipe from the early 19th century. We thought it was so yummy, in fact, that it became a welcome addition to our Christmas cookie repertoire. With a double batch under my belt just this afternoon, there is no time like the present to learn about this really neat, multi-purpose plant.

Most gardeners already know that coriander (Coriandrum sativum) is one of the few herbs that goes by two different names depending on the part of the plant used. Its foliage, known as cilantro, is used fresh in a number of culinary delights. When the plant goes to seed, known as coriander, it can be used in that stage as well, eaten whole, crushed or powdered.

I liken cilantro to be the "marigold" of the herb world. Either you love it or you hate it. I, for one, immensely dislike it and if given the chance to pick it out of my salsa I will certainly do so. Even in a restaurant. I found it interesting to learn that some people possess a geneticallly predisposed aversion to it, according to studies by Charles J. Wysocki, of the Monell Chemical Senses Center, in Philadelphia. To me it has a bitter taste that I have a hard time describing beyond that. Dirty? Soil-like? Most people that do dislike it have a similar lack of descriptive ability; they just can't put their finger on it, but they don't like the taste…or the smell of it.

It's funny that when my oldest daughter received her Ancestry DNA results, she was shown not to possess the genetic aversion. Well, she didn't get that from me….

Cilantro is often used in salsa and other Mexican, Asian and Italian dishes including curries, sauces, salads and soups. If you prefer to grow the plant more for its greens and less for its seeds, manage it as you would spinach. Sow seeds in the ground in the cool of the season and in succession every two weeks. It dislikes being transplanted but doesn't mind pot culture. Harvest greens rather aggressively- about one-third of the plant at a time. Just like spinach, there are slow-to-bolt varieties to choose from such as aptly named 'Slow Bolt' and 'Longstanding.' Cilantro's flowers are edible and they attract lots of beneficial insects such as lady beetles, parasitic wasps and syrphid flies.

Coriander seeds, on the other hand, have a pleasant (at least to me) fragrance once dried. The scent is easier to pinpoint too; nutty and spicy (ever so slightly) come to mind. Coriander seed is also well known in various ethnic cuisines and is a favorite in spice blends, curry being the most popular. It is also used in the making of a number of distilled spirits, herbal liqueurs and Christmas cookies as I have come to find out and favor!

The Herb Society noted that during World War II coriander seeds were coated in white or pink sugar and thrown from carnival wagons, earning the name "confections" or "confetti" When the seeds were replaced by balls of colored paper the name confetti stuck. Take this one to your next game of Cruise Ship Trivia!

It is easy to harvest the seeds. Simply let the heads dry to brown right on the plant. Clip them and place inside a paper bag; as they dry further they will open and the seeds will pop out. Even if you are only interested in harvesting the seeds, multiple plantings (or a big garden patch) are necessary to get a decent-sized harvest. Let a few drop their seeds and you will be blessed with a few self sown plants next spring.

Roberta McQuaid graduated from the Stockbridge School of Agriculture at the University of Massachusetts. For the last 28 years, she has held the position of staff horticulturalist at Old Sturbridge Village. She enjoys growing food as well as flowers. Have a question for her? Email it to ekennedy@turley.com with "Gardening Question" in the subject line.

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Where is this?



Turley Publications Photo by Ellenor Downer

This week's mystery photo is from Rutland. If any readers know where this photo was taken, they may email edowner@turley.com or call the Barre Gazette at 413-967-3505, extension 100 with their answer by noon on Monday, Dec. 14. The names of those that correctly guessed the location will appear in next week's edition. Dick Clark, Stephen Craven and Bruce Towner correctly identified the photo. Last week's photo the Petersham Center School, Spring Street, Petersham.

Senate passes FY 2021 budget

BOSTON – The Massachusetts State Senate unanimously passed a $46 billion budget for Fiscal Year 2021 (FY21), after adding $36.1 million in targeted investments over the course of two days of deliberations. Passed with bipartisan support, the budget aims to move the Commonwealth towards an equitable recovery by making critical investments in sectors impacted by COVID-19 including early education and childcare, food security, housing supports and public health.

Senator Anne M. Gobi (D-Spencer), member of Senate Committee on Ways and Means said, "I appreciate the patience of my communities and the many organizations and individuals that are helped with this budget. It is good we waited and did not do the budget during the summer when we would have had to make drastic cuts. I am very pleased that funding that assists everyone of the towns in my Senate District was included in this budget and look forward to assisting during this time of recovery."

As COVID-19 continues to spread across our Commonwealth, the Senate budget preserves access to essential services for the most vulnerable residents. The budget funds MassHealth at a total of $18.2 billion to maintain critical access to affordable health care coverage for over 1.9 million people, ensuring that comprehensive care for our most vulnerable children, seniors and low-income residents is protected in the middle of a public health crisis. The Senate's budget also includes targeted investments to maintain and expand access to mental health care, while strengthening public health infrastructure at the local, state and regional level to combat the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Senate's budget protects Massachusetts students and educational institutions. Continuing the Senate's long-standing support of targeted investments in education, this budget holds harmless Chapter 70 funding in a manner consistent with the agreement reached between the Senate, House and Administration in July by providing $5.283 billion, an increase of $107.6 million over FY20. This additional level of investment will allow all school districts to maintain foundation spending levels while accounting for enrollment and inflation changes. The budget also includes $345 million for the Special Education (SPED) Circuit Breaker, reimbursing school districts for the cost of educating students with disabilities at the statutorily required 75% reimbursement rate. In addition to ensuring stability for the state's K 12 population, the Senate's budget takes steps to invest in childcare providers and higher education institution, both of which are critically important to the state's economy and recovery in midst of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Senate's budget recommends a total of $46 billion in spending, a 5.5% increase over the Fiscal Year 2020 (FY20) General Appropriations Act. This spending recommendation is based on a revised tax revenue estimate of $27.592 billion, which provides for $3.558 billion less in available revenue than the original consensus revenue estimate originally agreed upon in January 2020. To close this anticipated revenue shortfall, the FY21 budget includes $1.5 billion from the Stabilization Fund, ensuring a majority of the Stabilization Fund balance remains for future years; $1.38 billion in available federal supports and more than $400 million in new revenue initiatives. Among those initiatives, the budget includes provisions such as accelerated sales tax collection and a new fee structure for Transportation Network Companies. The budget also avoids drastic budget cuts while leaving the Commonwealth in a sound fiscal position moving forward.

COVID-19 related budget items include: $10 million for grants to support local boards of health to combat COVID-19; $2.5 million for a new matching funds grant program to assist communities making public health-oriented adjustments to their public safety systems, including targeted reforms such as jail diversion programs, de-escalation training and professionals and behavioral health staffing and supports; $1.7 million for the State Action for Public Health Excellence (SAPHE) program to support a more effective local and regional public health delivery system and $1 million for a COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan program, focused on equitable vaccine distribution. In addition to these health care investments, the Senate's budget takes meaningful steps to expand access to care.

A Conference Committee will now convene to reconcile the differences between the Senate budget and the version passed by the House of Representatives last week.

NORTH BROOKFIELD

continued from page 1

and crosswalks in the area are generally older and are mostly not handicapped-friendly.

At the forum, residents and other stakeholders will have a chance to voice their concerns about infrastructure in the project area and will be able to review and comment on the engineers' field evaluation work to date. The town of North Brookfield invites residents who have knowledge of neighborhood infrastructure issues like flood-prone roadways, deteriorated sidewalks, or low water pressure to bring their local knowledge to the forum or to submit comments by email.

Lenard Engineering's engineering team is the town's consultant for this project. The project is funded through a fiscal 2019 Community Development Block Grant to North Brookfield from the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development. This grant is administered on behalf of the town by the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission. Questions about the public forum should be directed to Ashely Barre, at the Board of Selectmen's Office, at 508-867-0200 or selectmen@northbrookfield.net or Ian McElwee at the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, at 508-459-3331 or imcelwee@cmrpc.org. Questions or comments about the findings of the engineering study to date should be directed to Corey Brodeur at Lenard Engineering at 508-721-7600 or brodeur@lenard-eng.com.

TOYS FOR TOTS

continued from page 1

reside in Fitchburg, Leominster, Westminster, Ashburnham, Gardner, Templeton, Barre, Hardwick, Oakham, Hubbardston or New Braintree.

Toys for Tots requires that children receiving toys must be between the age of birth to 13 years.

People may email Cindy at clapinskas@mocinc.org with any questions.

HUBBARDSTON

continued from page 1

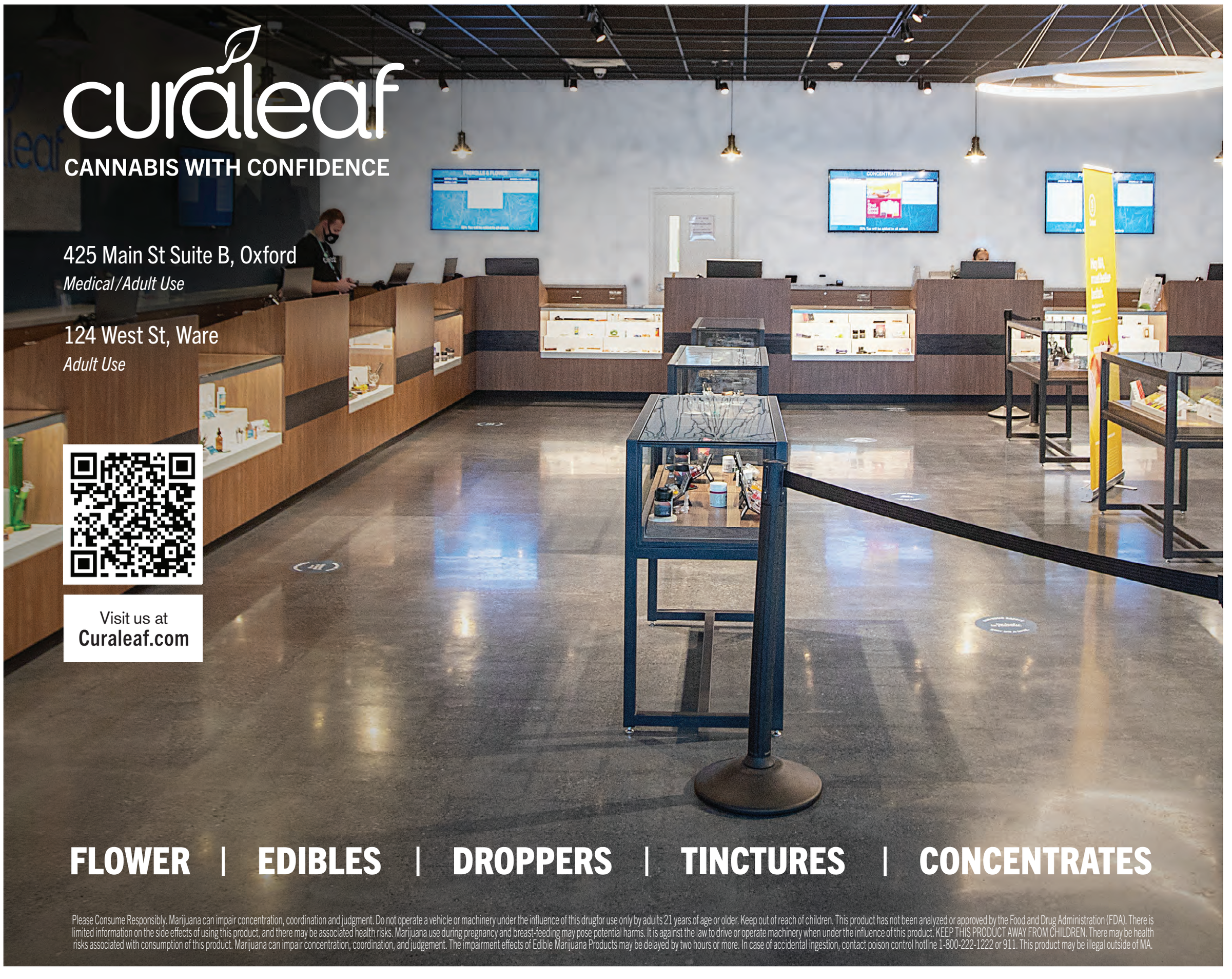
Questions from residents asked about the use of pesticides, the amount of water and odor of the outdoor grow. No pesticides are allowed and all nutrients used are organic. Bertold said it was not a hydroponic grow, which uses a lot of water. The water supply would be from wells drilled on the property. No test wells have been dug at this time. He said he was willing to buy and bring in water if needed.

Bertold said there would be some smell during the four to six weeks when the plant flowers. There is no odor before that stage.

Another resident said mailings to residents would be helpful. Town administrator Ryan McLane said it costs between $500 and $1,000 to send a mailing to all residents and budget constraints limit the amount of mailings. A resident suggested Bertold pay for the mailings. He said any resident can contact the town administrator with their address and he would mail them information.

Appointment to Planning Board

The three planning board members and five board of selectmen received two applicants for a vacancy on the planning board due to the resignation of an elected member. The applicants were Christopher Monroe and Peter Jetts. The appointed member would serve until the town election in June 2021. The joint boards unanimously voted to appoint Christopher Monroe to fill the vacancy. Members cited Munroe's legal background as a plus.



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SPORTS

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Panthers set for winter sports action



Girls basketball is also an approved sport for Quabbin, which starts practices on Dec. 14.

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

BARRE – The Quabbin Regional High School winter sports teams allowed to have competitions will be involved, Athletic Director Mark Miville announced last week.

He said Quabbin has been given the green light to be a part of the winter sports season in a "pod" that includes several schools from the surrounding area.

The region surrounding Barre has not had massive outbreaks of COVID-19 during the past two months, though a couple of communities did hit red or "high-risk" status during the fall season according to the old metrics.

This caused a brief shutdown during the end of October and early November as Quabbin lacked opponents to play during that time. But the Panthers were able to finish up their brief fall season, which included boys and girls soccer, field hockey, and cross country.

Miville was excited to see the students out at the schools playing sports, and believed, like many athletic directors, that being at the school playing sports in a controlled environment with masks and social distancing required was better than any alternative.

Despite a massive spike statewide in COVID-19 cases, Miville says he is excited to see Quabbin boys and girls basketball take the court beginning next week.

"I think that moving forward with strict guidelines and modifications in place will allow us to safely play basketball and hockey," said Miville. "We have done everything in our power to limit exposure for our student-athletes while here in school and with extracurricular activities. The modifications and guidelines address just that."



File photos

Boys basketball will be played this winter at Quabbin High School.

Modifications include limiting practices to 90 minutes, a roster maximum of 12 for Mid-Wach teams, and JV and varsity will practice in separate cohorts for basketball. etc. Our students will all SWAY (A COVID symptom check) before entering the gym (as we did in the fall) and a athletic trainer will be on-site for all practices and games.

Quabbin's pod will include Gardner, Oakmont, Quabbin, Narragansett, Fitchburg and Leominster. Leominster is an addition to the pod while Murdock is no longer part of the

See WINTER SPORTS, page 8

Academy team joining Pioneers organization

By Tim Peterson
Sports Correspondent

LUDLOW — The Western Mass. Pioneers will be adding a USL Academy League soccer team in 2021. The New England Mutiny are also in the process of forming an Academy soccer team.

Both Academy soccer squads, which will be playing their home matches at historic Lusitano Stadium in Ludlow, will be made up of the top U16-U19 prospects from the Western Mass. area.

"In club soccer, you're limited to certain age groups," said Joe Ferrara, who's the owner of the Mutiny and the new Pioneers General Manager. "An academy soccer team allows talented players to play for one team regardless of their age."

The Pioneers had about 50 players try-out for the Academy League team in November.

"The Academy League team is a new program that we've added this year," said Pioneers head coach Federico Molinari. "Our main goal is to develop the best local soccer players from Western Mass. to hopefully play for the Pioneers in the future."

Molinari, along with the Pioneers assistant coaches will be coaching the Academy League team in 2021.

"We wanted to have the same coaching staff for both the USL 2 team (Pioneers) and the USL Academy team," Molinari said. "We want both of the teams to play the

See ACADEMY TEAM, page 8

Jump balls eliminated, close contacted limited in basketball modifications

By Gregory A. Scibelli
gscibelli@turley.com

REGION – Modifications for boys and girls basketball have been released and the game will look a little different, though significant limits to fan attendance will restrict how many can see the different-looking game.

In Western Massachusetts, the Pioneer Valley Interscholastic Athletic Conference has decided the first practices will not take place until Jan. 4. Several other areas of the states are following suit. With no playoffs scheduled for the winter season, the various regions have the flexibility to decide when schools will begin and end play.

The Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association has set a Dec. 14 date as the soonest teams can start practicing. Several Central Massachusetts schools will start practicing then with contests likely to begin right after the new year.

One rule that will be consistent throughout all sports is the mask mandate.

Participants must wear masks or face coverings at all times will participating in practices or games. The one caveat is that all schools have the ability to designate areas where athletes can take "mask breaks." There will be areas designated for those breaks, especially during basketball games where players going up and down the court many times wearing a mask may need to catch a breath when the whistle blows. Because of the close contact involved with playing basketball, there was no way to play the sport safely without masks being worn.

The game will see modifications, but nothing too drastic and more along the way the timing, and setup of the game. Gameplay will be largely similar though different ideas were discussed to maintain distancing.

Like many other sports, the pre-game will be simplified. Only one captain will meet with the referees prior to the game. Starting lineups will likely be announced, but the tradition-

See BASKETBALL page 9

Pioneers tryouts conclude







Photos by David Henry www.sweetdogphotos.com

The Western Mass. Pioneers organization continued its tryouts for various age groups between Nov. 16 and 20, testing out the skills of many young people throughout the region to fill its various teams for the upcoming spring season. The Pioneers are hopeful for a normal schedule in 2021.





Star Speedway announces 2021 schedule

EPPING, N.H. – Star Speedway's 2021 schedule includes multiple major events, a full slate of weekly racing series divisions ready to race for a championship and the thrills and spills of staple shows to begin and end the season.

Fans will get a taste of Supermodifieds, Late Models, Modifieds, Midgets, Super Late Models, Trucks, Street Stocks and more over the course of more than 22 events of racing from April through October.

The schedule is headlined by two events for the Tri Track Open Modified Series (May 29 and July 24), including a new Memorial Day weekend show and the 10th annual SBM Classic in July. The 56th annual Star Classic returns, with a three-day show from Sept. 17 to 19, while there are countless other special events including memorial races and extra-distance shows planned. The Granite State Pro Stock Series is back at Star for two dates -- May 8 and a new Sunday special as part of the Star Classic weekend, Sept. 19.

Continuing tradition, the season begins with the Spring Bunny Brawl on April 24, and ends with the two-day Howler weekend, Oct. 23 and 24. Star will give teams, drivers and fans one week off each month during the season, with off nights scheduled for May 22, June 12, July 17, Aug. 28 and Sept. 4.

The J&S Paving 350 Supermodifieds will continue to honor some of the best of the past at Star Speedway, with six special events as part of their 10-race schedule for 2021. A champion will be crowned on Sept. 11. Major memorial events planned include the inaugural Dennis McKennedy Memorial race as part of the Star Classic:

Bob Webber Sr. Memorial (May 15)

Jen Garland Memorial (June 19)

Krupski Cup (June 26)

Marco Turcotte Memorial (July 24)

Jim Belfiore Memorial (Aug. 14)

Dennis McKennedy Memorial at Star Classic (Sept. 18)

See RACING, page 8

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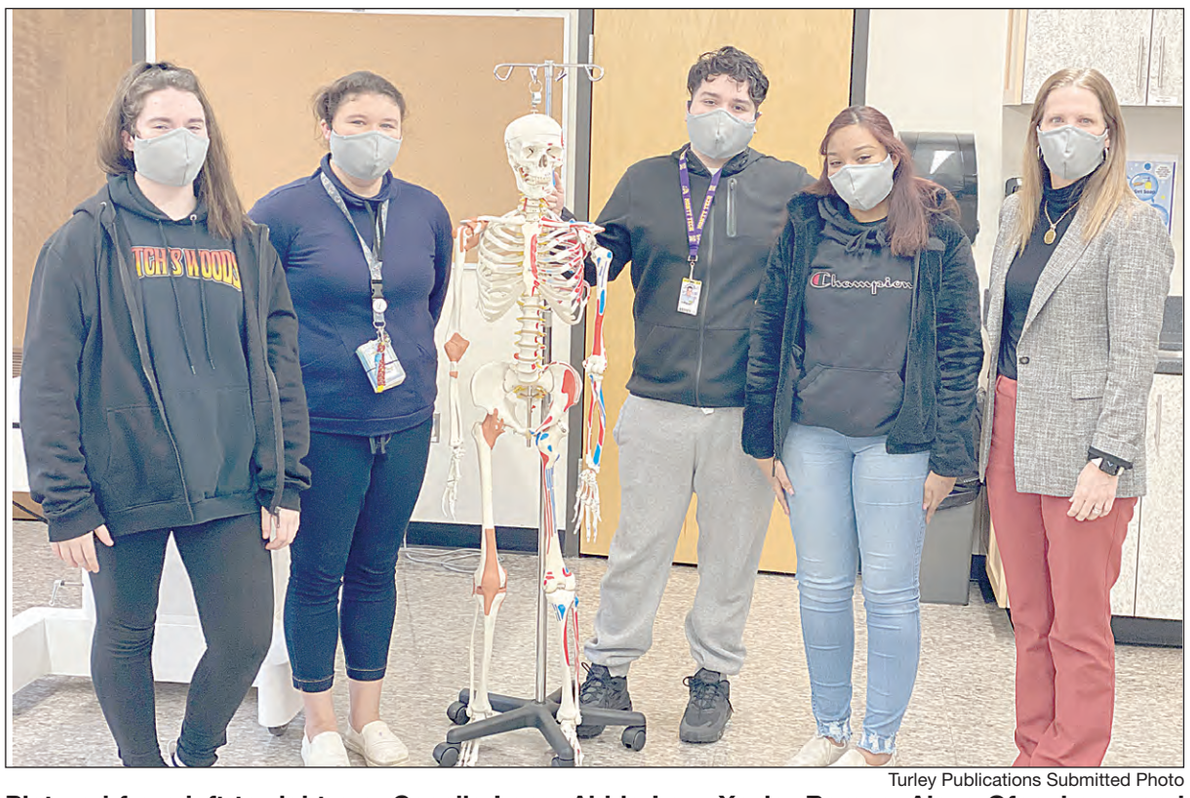
Education

Local furniture manufacturer donates supplies to Monty Tech

FITCHBURG – 2020 has been a challenge for all, and yet through these difficult times, we have seen our friends and neighbors come together to help one another, and businesses provide what they can to those in need. So when the United Way of North Central Massachusetts and philanthropic partner AIS, a Leominster-based furniture manufacturer, contacted Monty Tech's School Superintendent, it was only further confirmation that North Central Massachusetts does what is best for our students.

AIS launched its Sew the Masks campaign, calling on their sewing professionals to create high-quality masks using AIS-sourced materials. These masks would go on to be donated across the country, to ensure everyone who needs access to personal protective equipment has it.

Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School District educates approximately 1,400 students and employs just over 200 professionals. To be sure that every person in the school had an all-important mask, AIS recently donated 1,700 masks, which were distributed across the building on Wednesday, November 25th, just before the Thanksgiving holiday. "Having businesses like AIS reach out to ask how they can help – we just couldn't be more grateful. This is the perfect time of year to reflect on all that we have and to be thankful for partnerships that help keep Monty Tech moving forward," said Superintendent-Director Dr. Sheila Harrity. "We understand AIS has donated masks to area schools, all Massachusetts poll workers, and of course health care workers and first responders. I hear they were also recently recognized with the 2020 Corporate Hero award, in recognition of these efforts. They are truly deserving of this honor."



Turley Publications Submitted Photo

Pictured from left to right are: Cecelia Lane, Abbie Law, Xavier Ramos, Alexa Ofosuhene, and Sheila Harrity, Superintendent-Director of Monty Tech.

When students return to the Monty Tech campus on Monday, November 30th, they will be given a mask, and reminded to maintain safety and health precautions. School officials at Monty Tech have worked diligently to ensure the students are able to benefit from face-to-face instruction, which is only possible if everyone continues to exercise caution, washing hands and wearing masks, an effort made easier by AIS.

Elms College announces plan for spring 2021 semester

CHICOPEE – As it successfully concludes its on-campus plan for the fall semester, College of Our Lady of the Elms announced that the spring 2021 semester will continue to follow the hybrid ElmsFlex model.

Due to the campus community's successful efforts under the ElmsSafe health and safety protocols, the college was able to complete the in-person portion of the fall semester as planned with students on campus until the Thanksgiving break. The remainder of the fall semester will be taught remotely.

"I continue to be inspired by and grateful for the way our students, faculty, and staff have come together to protect each other both inside and outside of the classroom since we reopened our campus in August," said Harry E. Dumay Ph.D., MBA, president of Elms College. "All the measures included in our ElmsSafe plan – wearing masks, social distancing, practicing enhanced hygiene, testing, contact tracing, quarantining and isolating as needed – have allowed us to foster a vibrant and nurturing learning environment for students that will extend into the spring 2021 semester."

Spring classes, which will start on Jan. 26, 2021 and end on May 7, will continue to be taught in the hybrid ElmsFlex model, which gives students the option of attending sessions in the classroom, synchronously online, or a combination of both. Under the ElmsFlex model, students can move between the options based on their personal preferences and individual circumstances in order to continue their coursework.

Residence halls will be open with single-room assignments and students will receive designated days in January to return to or move into, their on-campus rooms.

COVID-19 testing will be required for all students, faculty and staff prior to being allowed back on campus in January. Also, throughout the semester, all students, faculty, staff and visitors coming to campus will be required to complete a daily online health survey.

Elms College continues to closely monitor and follow guidelines from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) and CDC, as well as Gov. Charlie Baker's mandates.

Out of an abundance of caution, classes will be held on Presidents' Day, Feb. 15 and there will be no spring break. Additionally, all domestic and international travel involving study abroad, mission or service trips has been cancelled.

The college is awaiting determinations by the New England Collegiate Conference and the NCAA as to whether competitive sports will be held in the spring.

For more information on Elms College's spring 2021 plan, people may visit www.elms.edu/elmssafe.

Kirsten Davis participates in Emerson College stage production

BOSTON – Emerson College, in cooperation with Live and In Color, debuted its first live, virtual, new musical, "This Golden Day,"" one of few, if any, higher education institutions performing arts entities executing a live musical online. The musical, which ran from Nov. 19-22, explores the concept of "the Golden Rule" and building community through various religions and diverse perspectives.

Conceived and created by Annie G. Levy and Devanand Janki, directed by Devanand Janki, with music direction by Jonathan Goldberg, the Emerson stage musical is comprised of ten mini musicals featuring new songs and music. Students worked in conjunction with nearly 20 esteemed professional lyricists and writers to refine the musical. Emerson Stage collaborated with Live and In Color, an organization that creates new stage works that promote diversity, particularly multi-ethnic participants.

Among those who took part in the production was Kirsten Davis of New Braintree. Davis is credited in the program as stage manager. Davis is pursuing a degree in stage and production management and is a member of the Emerson College Class of 2021.

QCC's Rad Tech program receives $70,790 grant

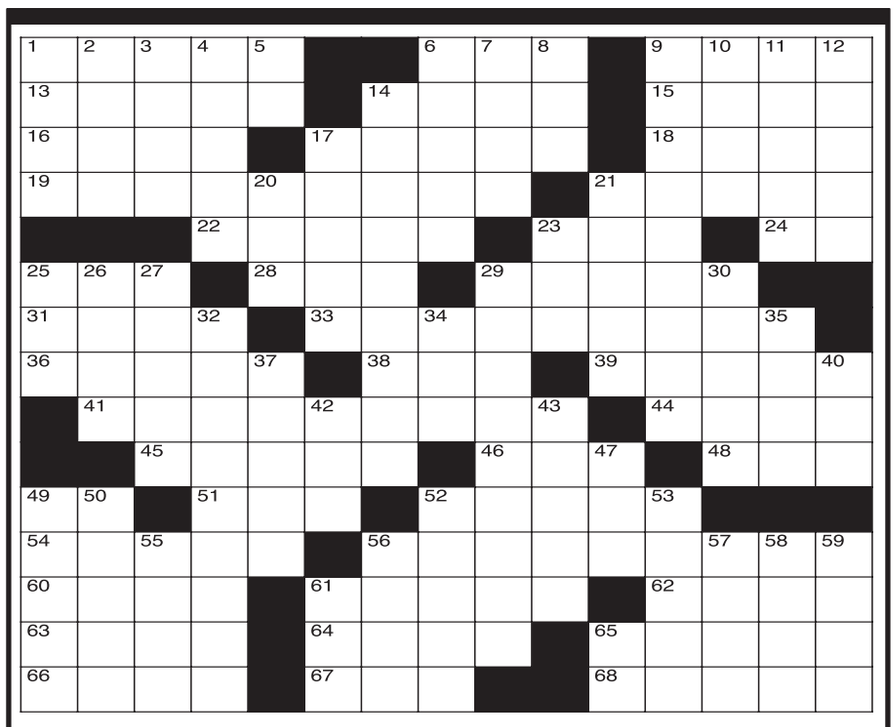
WORCESTER – Thanks to The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts, Quinsigamond Community College's Radiologic Technology (RT) program will soon have upgraded instructional imaging equipment. The college was recently awarded a 2020 Activation Fund Grant in the amount of $70,790. The grant was the second largest awarded to 14 organizations. The funds will be used to purchase cutting-edge digital radiography equipment that will help prepare students for their clinical rotations. The vast majority of hospitals now use digital radiography equipment in place of the more traditional imaging.

"I am so thankful for the support we received from The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts. The Foundation's generosity in helping our students learn on state-of-the-art digital imaging equipment will give them a huge advantage to seamlessly enter the workforce," said QCC's Dean of School of Healthcare, Pat Schmohl.

QCC's RT program admits up to 20 students per year, depending on the number of available clinical placements. The program has clinical affiliations with Health Alliance Leominster Campus, Heywood Hospital, Marlborough Hospital, St. Vincent's Hospital, UMass Memorial Medical Center Memorial Campus and UMass Memorial Medical Center University Campus. Graduates of the RT program must take and pass the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists credentialing exam in order to be employed as a radiologic technologist.

"The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts is pleased to be able to support QCC in this important initiative to provide Rad Tech students with training using digital radiology equipment, which helps maintain a highly-skilled and up-to-date workforce for the hospitals in the Central Massachusetts region," stated Jan Yost, President and CEO of The Health Foundation of Central Massachusetts.

For more information about QCC, people may contact Josh Martin, director of institutional communications at 508-854-7513 or jmartin@qcc.mass.edu.



CLUES ACROSS
1. Skateboarders love them
6. Popular sports podcast (abbr.)
9. Former Ohio State great Michael
13. Not dirty
14. Earth goddess (Greek myth.)
15. A Spanish river
16. Pig meat (French)
17. Famed astronomer
18. Floating ice
19. Broadcast
21. Aquatic mammals
22. Some are bath
23. Hip hop trio
24. NY Giants' #56
25. Small European viper
28. Neither
29. Multiple Tony-winner Rivera
31. Loud noise
33. Second year high schooler
36. "__ in comparison"
38. Golf score
39. Raise
41. Pastas
44. Easily manageable
45. Fathered
46. Pouch
48. Institute legal proceedings against
49. News organization
51. Unruly group of people
52. Fasten or secure
54. Sheets of glass
56. Doubled
60. Foolish person
61. Rooney and Kate are two
62. Small, rich sponge cake
63. Advice or counsel
64. Large wading bird
65. Famed British physicist
66. Narrow ridges (Swedish)
67. Field force unit
68. Lying face downward

CLUES DOWN
1. Proof of purchase (abbr.)
2. Soap ingredient
3. Blackbird
4. Single steps
5. Tin
6. Books have lots of them
7. Made of fermented honey and water
8. You can get it in a bed
9. Room for communal meals
10. Early Syrian kingdom
11. Provokes dry amusement
12. Use with "thou"
14. Mollusk
17. Grain storage units
20. Not a car, not a truck
21. Ooze
23. N. Vietnamese ethnic group
25. Tennis pros group
26. Something that's not what it's purported to be
27. E. Indian trees
29. Beloved December holiday
30. Regions
32. Metric unit of length
34. Peter's last name
35. Beige
37. 18-year period in astronomy
40. Where golfers begin
42. Basketball stat (abbr.)
43. Frocks
47. Soda comes in it
49. On approval
50. Trims by cutting
52. Small finch
53. Language Bura-__
55. Nothing
56. Imbecile (British)
57. Tropical Asian plant
58. Abba __, Israeli politician
59. Small freshwater fish
61. Indicates position
65. Data processing

ANSWERS ON PAGE 12

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WINTER SPORTS,
continued from page 7

pod and ceased playing sports during the fall due to COVID outbreaks. Murdock is located in Winchendon.

Another major sport that will be played this winter is ice hockey. Quabbin recently started a co-op program in the sport with nearby Gardner. Despite trying to limit contact between students in different schools, the MIAA is allowing co-op hockey to take place and Quabbin will participate with Gardner with a schedule still to be determined.

Many Central Mass. schools, including Quabbin, will begin practices on Dec. 14. They will be able to participate in games a couple of weeks later, though it is possible it may wait until after the holidays. Many other schools in the state are not starting practices until Jan. 4.

ACADEMY TEAM,
continued from page 7

same type of style. I do like coaching the younger soccer players."

The plan is for the boys' Academy League team to play their home matches prior to the Pioneers matches. Both teams will also be traveling together to road matches.

The boys' team will be competing against eleven other teams in the Northeast Division of the USL Academy League.

Molinari has been coaching the Pioneers, who are the defending Northeast Conference Champions of USL League Two, since 2012. The Pioneers weren't able to play any matches in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Pioneers did not suffer any losses during the 2019 regular season. They lost in conference finals and qualified for U.S. Open Cup, which wasn't held last summer. The Pioneers also qualified for the league playoffs in 2016.

"I really enjoy coaching the Pioneers and it was painful not being able to compete in any matches last year," Molinari said. "We won our Division title in 2019 and it was our best season since I've been coaching the team. We're now thinking about the 2021 season."

Ferrara gave his thoughts about adding a girl's Academy team for the Mutiny.

"We're looking for the top girl's prospects in the area to play for the girls academy team next year," he said. "The age group will be similar to the boy's side. The girl's academy team will probably have one or two older players."

The girls Academy team will be playing home matches before the Mutiny.

Jill Serafino is going to be the head coach of the girls academy squad.

Serafino is currently the Mutiny General Manager and is an assistant coach. She's also an assistant coach for the women's soccer team at Springfield College.

The Mutiny, who celebrated their twentieth anniversary in 2019, played all of their home matches at Lusitano Stadium for the first time.

The Mutiny also finished the 2019 regular season without a loss. They lost to the Lancaster Inferno in the United Women's Soccer Eastern Conference finals.

For more information on either Academy soccer teams please contact Joe Ferrara at jferrara@wmpioneers.com or 413-330-9775.

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Church News

Unexpected blessings sermon topic

By Carole Gariepy

PHILLIPSTON – Pastor Stephanie Flynn of the Congregational Church of Phillipston emailed her parishioners and asked them to send her some unexpected blessings, which occurred during the difficult days of this pandemic, and she included those responses in her sermon.

Even though Thanksgiving Sunday, Nov. 22 was cold, many warm souls gathered around Phillipston Common to hear the Word. Some listened from their cars, but many hardy folks bundled up and sat outside in lawn chairs. Jane French's nephew set up a heater beside the church steps where she sits so she cold keep warm enough to lead the music with her accordion. Very appropriately, the service opened with the hymn "Come Ye Thankful People Come." People came to express gratitude.



Submitted photos

Jane French leads the music with her accordion by heater.

The service was based on scripture from Genesis about Abraham and Sarah who had an unexpected blessing, something to be thankful for. They had longed and prayed for a child, but both at this time in the story were elderly, Sarah well beyond the age of being able to conceive. So when the Lord came to them and told them they would have a child, Sarah laughed at that being a possibility. However, she did get pregnant and delivered a son. They named him Isaac, which means "laughter." It's a good Bible story, one that gives hope and demonstrates the wondrous things God can do, also that He keeps His promises.

Pastor Stephanie talked about the power of faith, that faith gives us strength and courage. It helps us see a new future, to know there is good in store. Faith also calls us to reach out to those in need. That kind of faith was demonstrated as the bales of hay on the common were piled high with canned goods and paper products for the needy.

Abraham and Sarah had an unexpected blessing. Parishioners also told about being blessed -- having more time with the family, more time to play games, being more appreciative of phone calls and courtesies extended to them, time to do creative cooking, time to think about the things that really matter in life, and taking time to think about what is going right. Pastor Stephanie told us she keeps a journal and at the end of each day she writes down three things she was thankful for that day. Expressing thanks brings joy. Taking time to write down our thoughts makes us more grateful.

Everyone can find unexpected blessings if we look for them, and we will be happier if we do. They keep us positive. Let us be faithful. God is faithful.

May we count our unexpected blessings this Thanksgiving.



The church members collected canned and paper good for needy families.

Tri-Parish Community Church news

HARDWICK — Every journey back to a small town or area where you lived as a youngster, hoping to not see a lot of changes? Well, the Tri-Parish Community Church, per se, did not exist back then. From 1949 to 1953, my time in Hardwick as a foster kid on Sessions Road, I was first introduced to Christianity in the Hardwick Universalist Church where we worshipped for the first six months of the year; and then the Calvinistic Congregational Church across the common for the other six months. Over the next 60 plus years since then, Hardwick, New Braintree, and Gilbertville saw a drastic decline of parishioners in its four protestant churches. Sometime in those decades, the four churches united in order to survive; and right now, one of them is "somewhat" abandoned for church services. This week, when I walked into the front door of the Calvinistic Congregational Church, where I had attended Sunday School way back then, my heart broke. The structure was showing the signs of neglect despite a notice stating, "a work in progress." Up the winding stairway and I was in the sanctuary with its rows and rows of pews waiting to have worshippers, again. At the front of the sanctuary was the communion table with a plaque on it, "In Memory of Deacon Charles L. Warner from his widow, 1878-1907." In the choir loft is a huge, silent, beautiful, vintage, wood (maybe mahogany) organ. The whole building seems to say, "Is no one left to care?"

The pandemic is now taking its toll on small churches; and, the question is – how do we survive and thrive? Drop a helpful line at Tri-Parish Community Church, P.O. Box 202, New Braintree, MA 01531.

The Tri-Parish Community Church service planned for Sunday, Dec. 13 will be led by Jennifer Pollard at 10 a.m. in the Hardwick Universalist Church. All are welcome with social distancing and masks required.

BASLETBALL,

continued from page 7

al "high-five" lines will not be allowed, along with handshakes with the opposing coach.

There will be emphasis during game play to enforce rules about freedom of movement and closely guarding opposing players. Defenders are not allowed to impede the progress of offensive players, and will enforce the five-second rule on players who are being closely guarded.

The jump ball will be eliminated in favor of a simple coin toss to give possession of the ball to one team. Alternating possession will then prevail like the rest of the game typically does.

Free throws will look a bit different with just four players allowed with the shooter. Normally six players are allowed. When a player is awarded two or three free throws, they will shoot alone until the final shot to limit the time players are in close contact.

One bigger chance that affects the end-of-game strategy for teams is the "intentional" fouls used to try and gain possessions for a team that is trailing. A team will looking to intentionally foul for that purpose will inform the referee of that intention, and then lightly tag the player with the ball upon inbounding. The referee would then blow the whistle.

Jump balls will be whistled quicker in order to limit close contact.

Rosters are limited to no more than 15 players and three coaches on the bench, though many teams do not carry more than 12 or 13 players. The MIAA is also strongly discouraging

RACING,

continued from page 7

The Ken Izzett Construction Late Models are back with their own nine-race slate, headlined by an Independence Day weekend special on July 3, a 75-lapper, and a 100-lap feature on Aug. 21. The Late Models will also return to the Star Classic, this year as part of a Friday slate. The Late Model champion will be crowned on Sept. 11.

The MLM Diagnostic Fast 40 series return for the Woody's Street Stocks as part of the division's 16-race schedule. There will be four races in the 40-lap series (April 24, May 29, June 26 and Aug. 7), while the season will begin at the Bunny Brawl and end with the title battle on Sept. 26. The Street Stocks will continue to run their 50-lap race to end the season at the Howler, Oct. 23.

The EXIT Realty Pro Truck Series rumbles into the New Hampshire oval for two dates of their own, slated for events on Aug. 7 and Star Classic Sunday, Sept. 19. The North East Mini Stock Tour returns to Star three times -- including dates on June 5, Aug. 7 and Sept. 26. The annual NEMST 4 Cylinder Nationals main event will be run during their September date, moved from Classic weekend.

Two Wild And Whacky Wednesday night races are set for June 23 and Aug. 4, with both nights showcasing 4 and 6/8 Cylinder enduro races. The Six Shooters join the June show, while the August race is headlined by the Mia's Jewelry Boutique Slingshots and spectator one-on-one drag races. NELCAR returns to Star with their Legends Cars division in 2021, with dates on May 8 and Saturday, Sept. 18.

The three-day Star Classic will honor the late Bobby Webber Sr., beginning on Friday, Sept. 17, headlined by a 100-lap race for the Modified Racing Series, joined by the Late Models, Pure Stocks and Slingshots. On Saturday, the day full of winged warriors is back with the ISMA 125, Dennis McKennedy 350 Supermodified memorial, NEMA Midgets, NEMA Lites and NELCAR Legends Cars. On Sunday, the weekend ends with a 100-lapper for the Granite State Pro Stock Series, races for the EXIT Trucks, Classic Lites, Street Stocks and Six Shooters.

The Six Shooters will run 13 races, headlined by the Don & Aline Coster Memorial (July 10) and the Liz Paradise Memorial (Oct. 23). The Slingshots are set for 14 battles of their own, with a 40-lap special scheduled for part of the Aug. 4 show. There are 13 races for the Pure Stocks, races for the Classic Lites, and multiple enduro races for the 4, 6 and 8 cylinders.

The track will hold two swap meets -- one to start the season on April 17, from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m., and one in the fall, a two-day special on October 30 and 31 from 6:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The 2021 schedule is subject to change due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For more information visit Star Speedway at StarSpeedwayNH.com and follow the track on social media.

Local pastors offer sermons

A Season of Giving Pt. 1

Christmas is a season of giving. How can we not give in light of what Christ has given us? Of course, I am not referring simply to the giving of gifts on Christmas morning (though there is room for such a tradition). Rather, I am referring to the giving of ourselves for the benefit of others. What does such giving look like? What have we to offer beyond our finances and the tokens of our affection?

1) Time

One of my Bible school professors taught that "love" is spelled "T-I-M-E" and that we should give of that time to others. We invest such large portions of our time into our jobs, schooling, homes, hobbies, etc. Should we not be as diligent to invest in family, close friends, and those in need in our community? You and I must learn to give others quality time and undivided personal attention.

One of the things that amazes me about the life of Christ is how much He accomplished in so short a time. Do you realize that the whole of His public ministry lasted only about three years! Consider the grueling schedule Jesus must have maintained in order to fulfill the will of His heavenly Father. Yet, Jesus always made time to pour into His innermost circle of disciples, to minister to those in need, and to connect with those who happened across His path. Should we not emulate His example?

Heed the wisdom of the following biblical texts:

Ephesians 5:15-16

15 So then, be careful how you walk, not as unwise people but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil.

Psalm 90:12

12 Teach us to number our days, that we may gain a heart of wisdom.

2) Gifts and Talents

Do you realize that everyone has been given gifts by God to use for the betterment of others? This includes you!

Romans 12:4-8

4 For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. 6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; 7 if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; 8 if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

What gifts, talents and abilities do you possess and how might they be used to serve others? In what ways can you invest your area(s) of expertise and relative strength into those around you? You never know the difference that someone just like you can make! Remember that heaven takes note of even the smallest act of kindness done in Christ's Name.

Matthew 10:42

42 "And if anyone gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones who is my disciple, truly I tell you, that person will certainly not lose their reward."

3) Words

There is an old adage that "talk is cheap." I suppose this is true to a point, but few things are as enriching as encouraging, edifying and comforting words spoken in season. Have you ever been blessed by a kind word, compliment or a hand-written card? If so, then you have experienced the reality of the following passage:

Proverbs 16:24

24 Gracious words are a honeycomb, sweet to the soul and healing to the bones.

Scripture places a high premium on what pours forth from our mouths. In fact, we are under obligation to obey the following mandate (Eph. 4:29): "Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." This Christmas season, do not underestimate the power of your words:

Proverbs 18:21a

21 The tongue has the power of life and death . . .

4) Personal Experiences

The early chapters of the Book of Joshua record a fascinating account (cf. Joshua 3-4). Herein, the Lord supernaturally parted the waters of the Jordan River (making way for His people to enter the land of promise on dry ground). Having crossed the waters safely, the Lord commanded Joshua and the Israelites to erect a monument using stones from the dried-up riverbed.

Why did God issue such a command? Simply stated, this memorial would serve as a mechanism to trigger dialogue between children and their parents concerning His divine mercy, power, and faithfulness. It might have sounded a little something like this: "Daddy, why was that stone memorial put together? Child, that memorial was built using rocks that came from this river when the Lord stopped the waters and led us into this land by His mighty hand."

You see, God wanted His people to share of their stories and experiences that others might be introduced or inspired to faith in Him. This was true then and it remains true now-and we all have stories to tell! Perhaps they are stories of His love, grace, mercy, healing power, provision, protection, discipline or comfort, and beyond. Whatever you have been through, it is His intention that you share for the benefit of others.

Ultimately, God's work in your life should spill over into the lives of others:

2 Corinthians 1:3-4

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, 4 who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

Are you looking to give the perfect gift this holiday season? If so, may I recommend that you share freely of your time, your talents and abilities, love-infused words, and personal experiences that demonstrate the mercy, power and faithfulness of God in your life! You will find that these are the gifts truly worth giving.

Thank you for taking the time to read this publication. Feel free to check us out online at www.NewLifeBarre.org or visit us in person each Sunday at 10:30am (COVID-19 protocols are presented on the aforementioned website). We hope to see you soon!

Pastor James Foley
New Life Assembly of God
South Barre

Second Sunday of Advent

Communion Sunday
"The One who is more powerful than me"
(Our services can be watched on the church website at www.barrechurch.com and Facebook page)
Scripture Reading:
Mark 1 verses 1-8
I. Introduction:

Many of us find ourselves in situations sometimes, where we must remove obstacles and deal with issues to make life easier, whether it is in our families, at work, with friends and neighbors. It is about ironing out problems and making straight paths that are somewhat overly crooked. We read in the Gospel of Mark about making a straight path for the Lord. Let us follow Mark for a bit and see what he means by that.

II. The call to the wilderness

These first few verses in the Gospel of Mark create for us a connection between the Old

Testament and the New Testament, with reference to the prophet Isaiah in the second and third verses where it reads, "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way. A voice of one calling in the desert, Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for Him." It ushers in a new dispensation created by God. This is a wilderness setting, which is a message to the people of Israel to come back to the place where God wants to meet them. It is a place to be confronted with a message of repentance and to look towards redemption in Jesus the Christ. The person who initiates this call with his voice crying in the wilderness is John the Baptist, who believes he himself is unimportant, and that his message and baptism point to the One who is still to come, who is more powerful than him.

According to Herman Ridderbos in "The Coming of the Kingdom", the people would come to be baptized by John the Baptist, and confess their sins, but their sins would not be forgiven through his baptism, instead, this was merely an opportunity for them to actively turn away from their wrongdoings, and receive a message of hope in the One who would offer His forgiveness and salvation to them, the One who would baptize them with the Holy Spirit, Jesus Christ.

John is instrumental in introducing a new world order, a period of grace. His baptism would be a symbolic act of helping the people of Israel letting go of the old and allowing the new life in Christ to become part of them. They needed to straighten their paths for the Lord to do the work in their lives. They had to remove the obstacles in His way for Him to do what He needed to do. Mark talks about the Gospel of Jesus Christ as a period of joyful tidings, a period about change and transformation, authored and enacted by God, whose interest, and concern is about the saving of God's people from destruction.

III. He is more powerful than me, says John the Baptist

To be redeemed from their sins, they needed to reveal their sins to someone else who would look them into the eyes without judgment; someone who would be instrumental in the cleansing and redeeming process in their lives and give them new hope. This person would have the supreme dignity and power, says William Lane in his commentary on Mark, to transform their lives. That would be Jesus Christ, the Messiah, not be John, who would merely perform the act of the physical baptism, to symbolize the confessions of their sins, whereas the Messiah would impart the divine grace upon them, forgive them and offer their salvation. The Messiah would be filled with the Holy Spirit of God, and be the direct link to God, and be God on earth, teaching, guiding, forgiving.

John the Baptist would be imprisoned, we read. The Messiah would be tempted in the wilderness by satan, overcome those

See SERMONS, page 10

Barre Gazette

Obituary Policy

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary,** costing $100, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

Public Notices ARE NOW ONLINE

1 Email all notices to notices@turley.com

2 Access archives and digital tear sheets by newspaper title.

3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts' public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Mondays at noon, Fridays noon for Monday holidays.

visit www.publicnotices.turley.com

Public Safety

Barre Police Log

Sunday, Nov. 29
1 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Ruggles Lane – Transported to Hospital

Monday, Nov. 30
7:35 a.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Lane Road – Transported to Hospital
8:56 a.m. Alarm, Residential Church Lane – Investigated
11:40 a.m. Fraud Wheelwright Road – Report Filed
12:17 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Hubbardston Road – Ambulance Signed Refusal
5:57 p.m. Fraud Peach Street – Officer Spoke to Party

Tuesday, Dec. 1
4:10 p.m. Alarm, Residential Skelly Road – Officer Spoke to Party
6:08 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency North Brookfield Road – Ambulance Signed Refusal

Wednesday, Dec. 2
2:39 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop West Street – Citation Issued
12:47 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop South Street – Citation Issued
5:03 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Pleasant Street – Ambulance Signed Refusal
8:35 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop West Street – Written Warning
9:36 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Pleasant Street – Transported to Hospital

Thursday, Dec. 3
8:14 a.m. Fire, Medical Emergency North Brookfield Road – Transported to Hospital
1:16 p.m. Harassing/Annoying Phone Texts South Barre Road – Officer Advised

Saturday, Dec. 5
9:31 a.m. Fraud Fisher Road – Officer Spoke to Party
12:20 p.m. Motor Vehicle Accident South Street – Report Filed
7:37 p.m. Fire, Electrical Emergency Kendall Street – No Fire Service Necessary

Hubbardston Police Log

Sunday, Nov. 29
8:36 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Worcester Road – Citation Issued

Monday, Nov. 30
2:32 p.m. Fraud Underwood Road – Report Filed
2:40 p.m. Fraud Thompson Road – Report Filed

Wednesday, Dec. 2
5:42 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Elm Street – Transported to Hospital

Thursday, Dec. 3
3:46 p.m. Health Hazard Gardner Road – Services Rendered
5:19 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Gardner Road – Criminal Complaint
Summons: Rebecca L. Fischer, 46, Gardner
License Suspended, Operate Motor Vehicle With
6:50 p.m. Fraud Barre Road – Officer Advised

Friday, Dec. 4
6:10 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Worcester Road – Citation Issued

Saturday, Dec. 5
1:52 p.m. Motor Vehicle Accident Morgan Road – Vehicle Removed
3:20 p.m. Motor Vehicle Accident Gardner Road – Removed Hazard
5:07 p.m. Motor Vehicle Accident Worcester Road – Vehicle Towed
8:48 p.m. Fire, Electrical Emergency Ragged Hill Road – Referred to Other Agency
9:18 p.m. Fire, Explosion New Westminster Road – Investigated

Hardwick Police Log

For the week of Nov. 30-Dec. 7, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department conducted 55 building/property checks, 1 animal call, 7 emergency 911 calls, 9 safety hazards, 10 radar assignments, 16 directed/area patrols, 7 traffic controls, 2 identity thefts, 1 motor vehicle accident and 9 motor vehicle stops in the town of Hardwick.

Monday, Nov. 30
2:22 p.m. 911 – Medical Emergency Church Lane – Transported to Hospital

Tuesday, Dec. 1
5:05 p.m. 911 – Misdial Off Ruggles Street – Services Rendered

Wednesday, Dec. 2
11:48 a.m. Phone – Suspicious Activity Main Street – Spoken To
1:42 p.m. 911 – Medical Emergency Main Street – Transported to Hospital
5:37 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Lower Road – Citation Issued
10:22 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Lower Road – Citation Issued

Thursday, Dec. 3
5:48 p.m. Other – Identity Theft Main Street – Report Taken
8:12 p.m. Phone – Identity Theft Collins Road – Report Taken

Friday, Dec. 4
9:38 a.m. Initiated – Suspicious Activity Petersham Road – Investigated
10:16 a.m. Phone – Medical Emergency Hardwick Road – Transported to Hospital
2:55 p.m. Other – Suspicious Activity Fiske Road – Officer Handled
7:07 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Petersham Road – Written Warning
9:17 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Lower Road – Citation Issued

Saturday, Dec. 5
2:46 p.m. 911 – Safety Hazard Lower Road – Removed Hazard
3:02 p.m. Phone – Fire, Other Lower Road – Services Rendered
3:05 p.m. 911 – Safety Hazard Lower Road – Taken/Referred to Other Agency
1:13 p.m. Radio – Safety Hazard Lower Road – Taken/Referred to Other Agency
3:42 p.m. Radio – Motor Vehicle Accident Barre Road – Services Rendered
4:58 p.m. 911 – Medical Emergency Bridge Street – Transported to Hospital
4:58 p.m. Initiated – Safety Hazard Barre Road – Removed Hazard
5:40 p.m. Phone – Safety Hazard North Road – Services Rendered
6:40 p.m. 911 – Medical Emergency High Street – Transported to Hospital
6:46 p.m. Phone –Safety Hazard Czesky Road – Services Rendered
9:51 p.m. Phone – Safety Hazard Petersham Road – Removed Hazard

Sunday, Dec. 6
1:06 a.m. Phone – Medical Alarm Church Lane – Services Rendered
8:22 a.m. Phone – Safety Hazard Main Street – Taken/Referred to Other Agency
11:11 p.m. Phone – Medical Emergency Church Lane – Transported to Hospital

Monday, Dec. 7
7:56 a.m. Initiated – Safety Hazard Turkey Street – Dispatch Handled

Oakham Police Log

Tuesday, Dec. 1
10:49 a.m. Assist Other Police Department South Barre – Report Filed

Wednesday, Dec. 2
2:34 p.m. Complaint Stone Road – Information Taken

Thursday, Dec. 3
4:14 a.m. Alarm, Residential Old Turnpike Road – Building Checked/ Secured
10;03 a.m. Fraud Old Turnpike Road – Information Given
11:01 a.m. Fraud Old Turnpike Road – Information Given
2:50 p.m. Breaking and Entering In-Progress, Residential North Brookfield Road – Area Patrolled

Friday, Dec. 4
12:50 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop North Brookfield Road – Citation Issued
5:18 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Worcester Road – Citation Issued
9:46 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Worcester Road – Written Warning

Saturday, Dec. 5
9:08 a.m. Fire, Motor Vehicle Accident Old Turnpike Road – Transported to Hospital

NFPA urges caution when decorating with candles and electrical lighting

REGION - As families find creative ways to celebrate Halloween in response to COVID-19, the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) urges everyone to keep fire safety in mind, particularly when decorating with candles and electrical lighting.

"Because typical Halloween activities like trick-or-treating may be curtailed or even canceled in some communities, we suspect an even bigger focus on Halloween decorating in and around homes this year," said Lorraine Carli, NFPA's vice president of Outreach and Advocacy. "We urge everyone to carefully consider fire safety to ensure that celebrations remain festively spooky, not hazardous."

According to NFPA, candles are among the leading causes of U.S. home fires. NFPA's latest U.S. Home Candle Fires report shows that an annual average of 7,610 home fires are started by candles, resulting in 81 deaths, 677 injuries and $278 million in direct property damage. In addition, an average of 770 home fires started when decorations ignited. These fires caused an average of two civilian deaths, 20 civilian injuries, and $11.1 million in direct property damage per year.

NFPA offers these reminders to make sure everyone's Halloween celebrations don't go from "boo" to "boo-hoo":

Use a battery-operated candle or glow stick in jack-o-lanterns.

Dried flowers, cornstalks, and crepe paper catch fire easily. Keep all decorations away from open flames and other heat sources like light bulbs and heaters.

When using electrical lighting to decorate your home, make sure it is used in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Some lights are only for indoor or outdoor use, but not both.

Use clips, not nails, to hang lights so the cords do not get damaged.

Remember to keep exits clear of decorations so nothing blocks escape routes. Make sure all smoke alarms are working.

For families still planning to attend Halloween parties or go trick-or-treating:

When choosing costumes, stay away from long trailing fabric that could come in contact with open flames or other heat sources.

Teach children to stay away from open flames, including jack-o-lanterns with candles in them.

Provide children with flashlights to carry for lighting or glow sticks as part of their costumes.

People can visit the NFPA Halloween safety page for more resources of how to stay safe. Frightfully fun activities for kids can be found on NFPA's Sparky the Fire Dog® homepage.

Founded in 1896, NFPA® is a global self-funded nonprofit organization devoted to eliminating death, injury, property and economic loss due to fire, electrical and related hazards. The association delivers information and knowledge through more than 300 consensus codes and standards, research, training, education, outreach and advocacy; and by partnering with others who share an interest in furthering the NFPA mission. For more information, visit www.nfpa.org. All NFPA codes and standards can be viewed online for free at www.nfpa.org/freeaccess.

THE BARRE GAZETTE – *Serving the towns of Barre, Hardwick, Hubbardston,New Braintree, North Brookfield, Oakham, Petersham & Rutland since 1834*

Rutland Police Log

Sunday, Nov. 29
9:29 a.m. Fraud Brooke Haven Drive – Report Filed
9:35 a.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Prouty Lane – Ambulance Signed Refusal
11:26 a.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Main Street – Transported to Hospital
6:15 p.m. Suspicious Person Maple Avenue – Investigated

Monday, Nov. 30
9:39 a.m. Fraud Central Tree Road – Officer Spoke to Party
5:18 p.m. 911 Transfer Worcester – Call Transferred

Tuesday, Dec. 1
6:26 a.m. Motor Vehicle Accident Main Street – Vehicle Towed
8:01 a.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Highland Park Road – Transported to Hospital
8:20 a.m. Fraud Bushy Lane – Report Filed
10:14 a.m. Unwanted Party Maple Avenue – Investigated
2:03 p.m. Complaint Maple Avenue – Officer Advised
3:45 p.m. Fraud Briarwood Road – Report Filed
4:23 p.m. Fraud Marjorie Lane – Report Filed
4:52 p.m. Fraud Arrowhead Way – Report Filed

Wednesday, Dec. 2
12:37 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Paxton Road – Written Warning
8:46 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Paxton Road – Vehicle Towed
9:13 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Paxton Road – Citation Issued
9:30 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Paxton Road – Written Warning
9:56 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Paxton Road – Written Warning
10:22 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Edson Avenue – Citation Issued
10:50 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Glenwood Road – Arrest(s) Made
Arrest: Heather Bellrose, 43, Princeton
License Revoked as HTO, Operate Motor Vehicle With; Identify Self. Motor Vehicle Operator Refuse
3:24 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop East County Road – Written Warning
4:41 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Main Street – Transported to Hospital

Thursday, Dec. 3
1:49 p.m. Motor Vehicle Accident Main Street – Services Rendered
3:52 p.m. Welfare Check Main Street – Transported to Hospital
4:17 p.m. Fraud Prospect Street – Report Filed
5:38 p.m. Motor Vehicle Accident Main Street – Vehicle Towed
6:29 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency East County Road – Ambulance Signed Refusal

Friday, Dec. 4
12:18 a.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Anthony Drive – Public Assist
12:36 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Citation Issued
9:05 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Main Street – Vehicle Towed
11:32 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Maple Avenue – Citation Issued
12:01 p.m. Disturbance, Person(s) Miles Road – Criminal Complaint
Summons: Terri M. Shirley, 51, Whitinsville
Disorderly Conduct; Disturbing the Peace
1:26 p.m. Fraud Joanna Drive – Report Filed
3:12 p.m. Harassment Maple Avenue – Officer Spoke to Party
3:23 p.m. Fire, Brush Longmeadow Road – Fire Extinguished
3:40 p.m. Welfare Check Kosta Avenue – Arrest(s) Made
Arrest: Edward R. Sullivan, 41, Rutland
Warrant
5:11 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Main Street – Referred to Other Agency

Saturday, Dec. 5
8:59 a.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Wachusett Street – Transported to Hospital
9:08 a.m. Fire, Motor Vehicle Accident Old Turnpike Road – Transported to Hospital
11:28 a.m. Fire, Motor Vehicle Accident Pommogussett Road – Report Filed
11:46 a.m. Motor Vehicle Accident Pommogussett Road – Report Filed
4:36 p.m. Motor Vehicle Accident Pleasantdale Road – Vehicle Removed
6 p.m. Fire, Electrical Emergency Inwood Road – Investigated
7:07 p.m. Fire, Arcing Wires Forest Hill Drive – Referred to Other Agency
7:15 p.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Joanna Drive – Report Filed
7:37 p.m. Fire, Explosion Maple Avenue – Negative Contact
9:32 p.m. Fire, Electrical Emergency Campbell Street – Referred to Other Agency
9:55 p.m. Trespassing Maple Avenue – Officer Spoke to Party
10:09 p.m. Fire, Arcing Wires Maple Avenue – Referred to Other Agency

Sunday, Dec. 6
6:58 a.m. Fire, Medical Emergency Watson Lane – Ambulance Signed Refusal

Petersham Police Log

Monday, Nov. 2
2:46 p.m. Motor Vehicle Accident New Salem Road – Services Rendered
4:24 p.m. Safety Hazard North Main Street – Taken/Referred to Other Agency

Tuesday, Nov. 3
12:35 p.m. Larceny/Theft/Shoplifting West Road – Officer Handled

Saturday, Nov. 7
10:10 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop North Main Street – Citation Issued
3:09 p.m. Larceny/Theft/Shoplifting Nichewaug Road – Investigated

Tuesday, Nov. 10
12:56 p.m. Trespass New Salem Road – Spoken To

Wednesday, Nov. 11
2:26 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop North Main Street – Written Warning
3:21 p.m. Medical Emergency New Salem Road – Transported to Hospital

Thursday, Nov. 12
7:28 a.m. Suspicious Activity Spring Street – Call Cancelled
10:01 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop New Salem Road – Written Warning
1:54 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop East Street – Written Warning

Friday, Nov. 13
9:35 a.m. Safety Hazard Pat Connor Road – Removed Hazard

Saturday, Nov. 14
8:53 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Road – Written Warning
10:08 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop New Salem Road – Written Warning
2:22 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Road – Written Warning
6:04 p.m. 911 Misdial South Main Street – Negative Contact

Sunday, Nov. 15
11:31 a.m. 911 Misdial East Street – Spoken To
9:09 p.m. Alarm North Street – Transferred Call to C1

Tuesday, Nov. 17
4:43 a.m. Animal Call Common Street – Services Rendered
12:10 p.m. Assist Other Agency Hardwick Road – Services Rendered
1:50 p.m. Scam Nichewaug Road – Report Taken
3:27 p.m. Assist Other Agency Oakham – Services Rendered

Wednesday, Nov. 18
2:30 a.m. Alarm North Street – Transferred Call to C1

Thursday, Nov. 19
9:05 a.m. 911/Hang-up Call Glen Valley Road – Spoken To
10:46 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop New Salem Road – Citation Issued
1:46 p.m. Medical Alarm Barre Road – Spoken To

Friday, Nov. 20
12:46 p.m. Medical Emergency North Main Street – Transported to Hospital
6:56 p.m. Complaint Nelson Road – Services Rendered

Saturday, Nov. 21
9:48 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop New Salem Road – Written Warning
4:25 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop South Main Street – Written Warning
4:53 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Road – Written Warning

Monday, Nov. 23
2:13 p.m. 911/Hang-up Call North Main Street – Dispatch Handled

Tuesday, Nov. 24
10:37 a.m. Suspicious Activity Hardwick Road – Investigated

Wednesday, Nov. 25
2:21 p.m. Fraud Petersham Police Department – Report Taken

Thursday, Nov. 26
6:20 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Road – Citation Issued

Friday, Nov. 27
1:44 p.m. Hazardous Incident East Street – Officer Handled

Saturday, Nov. 28
9:01 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Road – Written Warning
10:27 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Road – Citation Issued
11:37 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Town Common – Written Warning
1:07 p.m. Safety Hazard Monson Turnpike Road – Removed Hazard
2:01 p.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Road – Citation Issued
4:26 p.m. 911 Misdial East Street – Dispatch Handled

Sunday, Nov. 29
9:24 a.m. Medical Emergency North Main Street – Transported to Hospital
3:15 p.m. Motor Vehicle Accident South Main Street – Services Rendered

Monday, Nov. 30
7:05 a.m. Safety Hazard New Salem Road – Taken/Referred to Other Agency
10:22 a.m. Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Road – Written Warning
11:05 a.m. Motor Vehicle Accident Hardwick Road – Spoken To
2:22 p.m. Suspicious Activity Briggs Road – Services Rendered

New Braintree Police Log

For the week of Nov. 30-Dec. 7, the Hardwick/New Braintree Police Department conducted 21 building/property checks, 3 radar assignments, 2 motor vehicle accidents, 6 motor vehicle stops, 19 directed/area patrols, 9 safety hazards, 7 traffic controls, 1 animal call and 2 emergency 911 calls in the town of New Braintree.

Tuesday, Dec. 1
4:10 p.m. Phone – Safety Hazard Hardwick Road – Services Rendered

Wednesday, Dec. 2
4:51 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Gilbertville Road – Citation Issued
9:07 p.m. Radio – Safety Hazard Hardwick Road – Services Rendered

Thursday, Dec. 3
5:47 a.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Barre Road – Written Warning
5:51 a.m. 911 – Animal Call Barre Road – Dispatch Handled

Friday, Dec. 4
11:16 a.m. Phone – Safety Hazard Hardwick Road – Dispatch Handled
9:47 p.m. Initiated – Motor Vehicle Stop Hardwick Road – Citation Issued

Saturday, Dec. 5
10:42 a.m. 911 – Medical Emergency Letendre Lane – Transported to Hospital
11:29 a.m. Phone – Safety Hazard West Brookfield Road – Taken/Referred to Other Agency
1:38 p.m. Radio – Motor Vehicle Accident West Brookfield Road – Vehicle Towed
1:52 p.m. Initiated – Safety Hazard Gilbertville Road – Removed Hazard
3:20 p.m. Radio – Motor Vehicle Accident West Brookfield Road – Vehicle Towed
3:20 p.m. Phone – Safety Hazard Moore Road – Taken/Referred to Other Agency
3:27 p.m. Phone – Safety Hazard Ravine Road – Services Rendered
3:58 p.m. Radio – Safety Hazard Thompson Road – Taken/Referred to Other Agency
4:56 p.m. Phone – Safety Hazard Worcester Road – Could Not Locate
8:07 p.m. Radio – Safety Hazard Barre Road – Taken/Referred to Other Agency

SERMONS

continued from page 9

temptations, and begin the ministry of healing and driving out of evil spirits, and create a group of people around Him who would carry forth the work of God. His power would be witnessed and experienced by many who followed Him.

IV. The Power of Advent and Christmas

This introduction of Mark speaks to the power of Advent and Christmas. It reveals the intent of God to restore God's people to their original relationship with God. It is a divine power beyond all forces that want to destroy, a power that wants to restore and heal and bring people together in Christ, in the church and with one another in their families, communities; and it is a power that wants to heal nations and the world from destruction.

Christmas is therefore a time to celebrate this powerful Child of God, who is such a mystery to us, but is so very real in our lives. Advent is a time to reflect on our imperfect lives in the face of our perfect Messiah who wants to take all our sins and weaknesses and transform our lives in loving service to God and one another.

We, and the whole world are called into the wilderness also, where we must face ourselves, our hearts and our minds and our actions, where we confess our sins and seek redemption from our powerful Lord and Saviour. We are called to straighten the path for the Lord's work in us!

May God help us to humbly seek forgiveness and remove the obstacles in our way that prevent us from really experiencing the amazing grace of God in our lives. May we be open to receive the blessing of the Son and the Holy Spirit in our lives every day. May we experience the power of love and joy in our lives as we look forward to celebrating Christmas together!

Amen
Pastor Margaret Keyser
Barre Congregational Church

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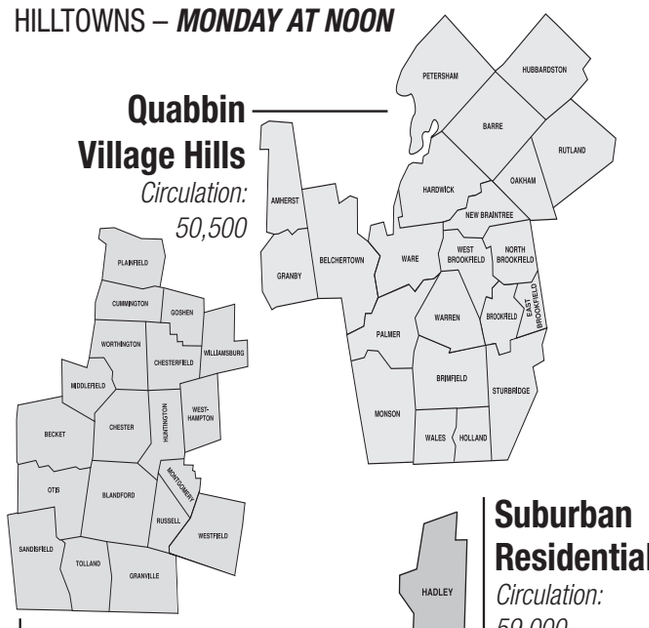
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Free COVID-19 vaccines at Big Y Pharmacies when approved and available

SPRINGFIELD – In partnership with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), all 33 Big Y Pharmacy and Wellness Centers are preparing to administer the COVID-19 vaccines once approved and available for distribution. This partnership is being established in anticipation that one or more COVID-19 vaccines will be authorized and approved for use in the United States as part of the Federal Pharmacy Partnership Strategy for COVID-19. This initiative by the HHS with pharmacies across the United States is part of the federal pharmacy program aimed to further increase access to the vaccines. The partnership has deemed pharmacists, pharmacy technicians and pharmacy interns in retail and grocery stores as being crucial public health partners for increasing access and convenience of COVID-19 vaccines.

Big Y's pharmacy team currently provides seasonal flu and other routine vaccines. They plan to participate in any additional training to ensure the safe administration of the vaccine along with educating their customers about the process.

According to Charles L. D'Amour, president and CEO, "We are proud to partner with the United States government in order to provide free COVID-19 vaccines to our customers. When a vaccine is available, our pharmacy teams will be ready to administer them as per CDC guidelines."

Big Y Foods, Inc. is one of the largest independently owned supermarket chains in New England. Big Y operates 85 locations throughout Massachusetts and Connecticut including 71 supermarkets, Fresh Acres Market, Table & Vine Fine Wines and Liquors and 12 Big Y Express gas and convenience locations with almost 12,000 employees. Big Y has been recognized by Forbes as a Best-in-State Employer in Massachusetts and Connecticut, as well as 2018 Employer of Choice by the Employers Association of the Northeast. Founded in 1936 by brothers Paul and Gerald D'Amour, the store was named after an intersection in Chicopee, Massachusetts where two roads converge to form a "Y".

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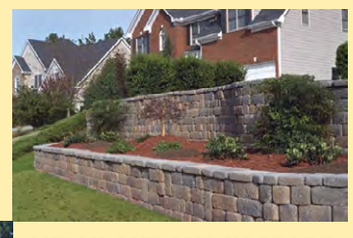
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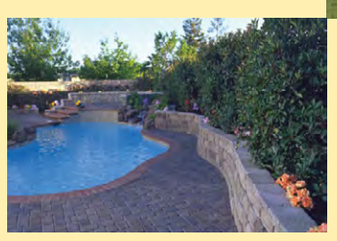
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